

Guang Pan

# A Study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945)

History, Theories and the Chinese Pattern



上海交通大学出版社  
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# Preamble

More than 70 years ago, many righteous people offered their hands to the Jews in danger due to crazy Nazi persecution. Turning away a Jew who struggled for survival is tantamount to killing a life. Looking back at that history, we are proud that the Chinese people and the city of Shanghai had opened our arms and our doors to the European Jewish refugees at that critical moment. From 1933 to 1941, a huge crowd of European Jews fled to Shanghai to escape from Hitler and some other Jewish refugees came to other cities of China. The total number of European Jewish refugees in China came around 30,000. While some of them went on to other countries, Shanghai and other Chinese cities still sheltered about 25,000 Jewish refugees when the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, more than the Jewish refugees in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India combined.

When 6 million Jews faced massacre in Europe, the Jewish refugees in China shared weal and woe with the Chinese people, and some even participated in the just war of the Chinese people against the Japanese fascists. At present, the Jewish refugees and their descendants scatter all over the world, but they still cherish their “Chinese memory” and have a strong “Shanghai complex.” This special history is highly recognized by the international community, in some sense as a contribution of the Chinese people during the Great War. I remember that, about 20 years ago, many commemorative events were held in Europe to mark the 50th anniversary of the victory of World War II, and one of them was closely related to China: the seminar on Austrian Jewish refugees in Shanghai held in Salzburg, Austria. I attended the meeting and gave a keynote speech. I also met with many old Jews who had taken refuge in Shanghai. Just a few days after the event, the Austrian parliament passed a proposal to set up a fund to compensate for the suffering of Austrian Jews caused by the Nazis. Now, every year, volunteers from the Austrian “Holocaust Memorial Service” would come to work at the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai where I am Dean.

In 1994, Shanghai Municipal Government and Hongkou District Government set up a monument in memory of Jewish refugees in Huoshan Park (formerly known as Wayside Park). Rabbi Arthur Schneier, Leader of the American Jewish community, said with excitement at the opening ceremony, “Schindler’s list saved a

thousand lives but Shanghai saved a whole community of many thousands.” At the turn of century, Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum was established. A lot of international political leaders, including Israeli presidents and prime ministers and other Jewish celebrities, as well as the German Presidents and Chancellors the Austrian President, and the First Lady of the USA have visited the museum in Shanghai. Young people from China and around the world have also come to the museum to learn about the special history.

Now, the word “Shanghai” has become synonymous with “salvation” and “haven” in documents about the Holocaust. The unforgettable history of Shanghai’s generosity to rescue Jewish refugees and the mutual support of Chinese and Jewish people during the darkest years have become a hot subject of academic research and artistic creation. Papers, books, novels, movies, and dramas on this subject have proliferated. Exhibitions have been held one after another in various locations, because this subject not only is of academic value, but also has great relevance to the contemporary world. In recent years, international hegemonism and power politics have prevailed, so neo-fascism, racism, extremism, and terrorism have emerged and threatened the world again. The term “clash of civilizations” is in vogue. Some people openly denied the atrocities of the Nazis and Japanese fascists. This makes discussions about “Chinese Jews,” especially the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, more relevant as a warning. At the same time, this subject, with its focus on Sino-Jewish relationship, has a potential to play a role in Chinese people’s friendship with people from many other countries.

The Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS) began to conduct research on Jewish refugees in China in the 1980s and delivered a series of results which have been widely publicized through seminars, exhibitions, mass media, and movies. However, our basic research on that special history was still weak, due to various restrictions. For example, it was a pity that many Jewish refugees who were still alive were not yet interviewed, and some first-hand information was not thoroughly analyzed.

In late 2010, the “Study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945)” was officially approved as a major National Social Science Fund project of which I was Chief Expert. This is great news for our team, as the funding will significantly improve our research quality and level. Since March 2011, after the project started, our team members have managed to interview many former Jewish refugees who were alive and descendants of deceased refugees, collecting a considerable amount of oral and written accounts of that history, as well as a large number of documents concerning the Jewish refugees. Through a more systematic and in-depth research on these materials, our research is more solid in both literature study and theoretical construction.

In 2015, *Jewish Refugees Memoirs: Their Experience in Wartime China* was published, based on the first-hand oral and written accounts of 38 Jewish refugees in China which told how they had fled from Nazi-controlled Europe to Shanghai and other parts of China, spent the most difficult time in the Hongkou ghetto, shared unforgettable experiences with the local Chinese people, and their emotional links with the Chinese people after leaving China. The book lists the names of 13,732

Jews who survived in Shanghai during World War II. The publication of this book also marked the 70th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, so it has special historical and realistic value.

On this basis, we have further collected and compiled a large number of papers, documents, newspapers, memories, personal bios, and comments concerning the Jewish refugees in China. In 2016, we completed *Sources on Jewish Refugees in China* in four volumes. The first volume contains documents and newspapers, mainly including documents concerning Nazi persecutions of Jews and the Holocaust like the Nuremberg Act and the Final Solution to the Jewish Question; documents showing the “civil” society’s indifference to the Jewish tragedy like the Evian Conference decision and the British White Paper; documents detailing the Chinese government’s plan to resettle Jews, the Chinese and foreign relief organizations’ aid to the European Jewish refugees in Shanghai; and the annual reports of Shanghai Municipal Council as well as reports of Chinese, English, and German newspapers on the rescue of Jewish refugees in China and stories of their life in Shanghai. In particular, it includes The New York Times report on the reunion of Jewish refugees. The second volume presents memories, including oral and written accounts: articles, papers, and records of Madam Soong Qing-Ling protesting against Nazi persecution and Dr. Ho Feng-Shan’s issuance of life-saving visas to Jews; memories of how Zillah Walhaftig, Laura Margolis, Wang Tifu, and others tried to aid and rescue the Jewish refugees; Mitsugi Shibata, the Japanese consul in Shanghai, recalling his arrest and torture due to secretly warning the Jews of the Meisinger Plan; M. W. Beckman’s narrative about the Jewish refugees in Tianjin; memories of Chinese people about their Jewish neighbors; reminiscences and narratives of Rena Krasno, Gunter Nobel, and Tang Yating about the US aircraft bombing of Hongkou, the left-wingers of Jewish refugees, and the music life of Jewish refugees; N. A. Palkowitz, Isador Majid’s memories and accounts of the post-war situation of former Jewish refugees. The third volume is about the outstanding figures in the Jewish refugees. It introduces 20 of them: the great friend of the Chinese people, Jakob Rosenfeld, the Foreign Soldier of the Eight Route Army Hans Miller, Hans Shippe who sacrificed his life in the War of Resistance battlefield, musician Alfred Wittenberg, Fanny Halpern who was committed to China’s cause of mental health, Israel Epstein who shared the Chinese people’s hardships, “Polish Bethune” Stanislaw Flato, Jewish refugee painter David Ludwig Bloch, Shaul Eisenberg who changed from a refugee to a business tycoon, Jewish composer Wolfgang Fraenkel, former US Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal, Austrian painter Friedrich Schiff, Hellmut Stern who changed from a refugee boy in Harbin to lead violinist of Berlin Orchestra, Richard Frey who participated in the Chinese revolution, Peter Max who learned painting from his Chinese Amah and painted the portrait of President, Ruth Weiss who shared the same fate with the Chinese people, Engineer Hans Hamburger who regarded Shanghai as his hometown, Comparative Linguist Erwin Reitier, and Excellent Photographer Eva Standberg. The fourth volume is a collection of research results by our team members and other domestic and foreign scholars on Jewish refugees in China,

including: “The Impact of the Holocaust on the Jewish nation and Civilization,” “Internal and External Reasons for European Jews to Choose Shanghai as a Haven,” “China’s Newspapers Exposing and Condemning the Anti-Semitic Atrocities in Nazi Germany,” “The Journey of Jewish refugees Fleeing to Shanghai: Route, Time, Number and Resettlement,” “How Did Polish Jews Become Refugees in Shanghai in 1941,” “The European Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai,” “Aspects of the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Community,” “Zionist Activities of Shanghai Jewish Refugees,” “The Social Role and Historical Significance of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle,” “Friendship of Jewish Refugees and the Chinese People Experiencing the Hard Time Together,” “The Sterns’ Exile in Harbin,” “Integration of German Jews in Qingdao from 1945 to 1947 and Issues Concerning Business Disposal,” “The Meisinger Plan and the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees,” “Why Were Jewish Refugees Able to Survive in Shanghai,” and “China Jews: Always a Hot Topic.” The book was published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press in May 2017.

Meanwhile, our team members published some monographs individually, such as Steve Hochstadt’s “Exodus to Shanghai: Stories of Escape from the Third Reich,” Wang Jian’s “Flee and Rescue: Jewish Refugees in Shanghai during World War II,” Guang Pan and Wang Shuming’s “Diaspora and Asylum: The Unforgettable History of the Jewish People,” Wang Shuming’s “Memory of the Holocaust and American Diplomacy.” Our members also published more than ten papers like “Political Activities of the Shanghai Jewish Community in the First Half of the 20th Century,” “Harbin Jewish Cultural Activities and Their Influences,” and “The Holocaust Memory and the Dissolution of Anti-Semitism.” In 2015, two bilingual Chinese and English albums “Jews in China” and “Jews in Shanghai” edited by Guang Pan were published, which were later translated into French and German.

Our team also held a series of seminars. Based on the data collected by the first research group, our second group deepens the study of the life of Jewish refugees in China, mainly focusing on the Jewish refugee community in Shanghai while strengthening research on the Jewish refugee communities in Harbin, Tianjin, Dalian, and Qingdao. The third group used the push-pull model to analyze the motivation Jewish refugees fleeing to China, studied the Jewish refugees in Shanghai from the perspective of ethnic diaspora, and dug into the collective memory and the “Chinese complex.” The fourth group focused on the “Chinese Pattern” of haven for Jews during the Holocaust.

Based on the above research results, our team finally delivered the final project outcome in April 2017: “A Study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945): History, Theories and the Chinese Pattern.” The book has three parts and twenty chapters. The part of “Facts” is entitled “Formation, Development and End of the Jewish Refugee Community in China.” On the basis of sufficient data, documents, and records, this part surveys the history of Jewish refugees in China systematically and gives considerable details. The content includes: Chap. 1 “Historical and Recent Events Bringing European Jews to China”; Chap. 2 “Jewish Refugees Arriving in China (1933–1941): Route, Time, Number and Resettlement”; Chap. 3 “The Jewish

Refugee Community in Shanghai”; Chap. 4 “Jewish Refugees in Other Chinese Cities”; Chap. 5 “The Final Solution for Jewish Refugees in Shanghai and the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees”; Chap. 6 “Jewish Refugees and the Chinese People: Friendship in a Troubled Time”; Chap. 7 “Departure of Jews and End of the Jewish Refugee Community in China.” The “Theories” part is entitled “A Theoretical Perspective on Jewish Refugees and the Sino-Jewish Relationship,” mainly reviewing the international context of Jewish refugees in China based on theories. It includes: Chap. 8 “The International Background: The Impact of the Holocaust on Jews”; Chap. 9 “The Push-Pull Theory and Motivations of Jewish Refugees”; Chap. 10 “Exile and Perseverance: The Ethnic Diaspora Theory and the Jewish Refugee Community in China”; Chap. 11 “A Theoretical Analysis on the Collective Memory and the China Complex of Jewish Refugees”; Chap. 12 “Struggling to Survive: Why Could Jewish Refugees Survive and Prosper in China”; Chap. 13 “Perfect Combination of Traditional Historiography, Public History and Oral History: Studies of Jews in China Since the Mid-20th Century.” Based on the major features of Jewish refugees in China during the Holocaust and a comparison with Jewish refugees in other parts of the world, the concept of “Chinese Pattern” is proposed and analyzed in Part III: “The Chinese Pattern of Haven for Jews during World War II.” The content is as follows: Chap. 14 “History of Jewish Refugees Before the Holocaust”; Chap. 15 “Jewish Refugees During Nazi Germany: Aid to Refugees Outside China”; Chap. 16: “Characteristic I of the “Chinese Pattern”: Open Big Cities as the Main Havens for Jewish Refugees”; Chap. 17: “Characteristic II of the “Chinese Pattern”: Jews Living in an Atmosphere Free from Anti-semitism”; Chap. 18: “Characteristic III of the “Chinese Pattern”: Existence of a Rich and Strong Jewish Community”; Chap. 19: “Characteristic IV of the “Chinese Pattern”: Jewish Refugees Having a High Level of Cultural Literacy”; and Chap. 20: “Characteristic V of the “Chinese Pattern”: Jewish Refugees Able to Survive by Utilizing the Conflicts Between the Dominant Powers.”

It deserves mentioning that the delivery of the final outcome and the imminent conclusion of this project do not mean that our research on Jewish refugees in China will end. Some hot issues concerning Jewish refugees in China are still controversial. Some issues still need further research to arrive at convincing conclusions, and some doubts need to be addressed with more evidence. We believe that, as the research of our team and our colleagues home and abroad gets deeper, new evidence will be found and unique insights and innovative perspectives will emerge in the years ahead. It should also be pointed out that our final outcome and our interim results present only part of the information we have collected. Of course, in the future, we will also present all other information to our readers, perhaps not only through the publication of books but also through publicly accessible database. To this end, we are connecting and coordinating with Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press, Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, Shanghai Archives, CPPCC Shanghai, and our foreign partners.

We firmly believe that the history of Sino-Jewish friendship will shine with great brilliance in the twenty-first century. Many people, including our team members, have spent a lot of time and energy to restore the unforgettable history through

collating and studying the vast historical sources and collecting the first-hand accounts of the Holocaust survivors to make sure that our future generations could learn from history and make the world a better place for all.

I hope our efforts to promote this special history of mutual assistance, righteousness, and benevolence will help build a new world of harmony and inclusiveness.

Shanghai, China  
April 2017

Guang Pan

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# **Part I**

## **Formation, Development and End of the Jewish Refugee Community in China**

Based on a systematic survey and deep reading of documents, this part offers an overview of the journey of European Jews fleeing to China and their conditions in China as refugees. It presents the historical and recent reasons for Jews to travel to China, the route, time, number and resettlement of Jewish refugees in China, the formation and transformation of Jewish communities in Shanghai and other cities in China, the sufferings of Jewish refugees in China under Nazi Germany and Japanese fascists, the Sino-Jewish relationship during the wartime period, and the departure of China Jews and the end of Jewish refugee community in China.

# Chapter 1

## Historical and Recent Events Bringing European Jews to China



In the 1930s and 1940s, during the Holocaust, a large number of Jews fled from Germany and other Nazi-controlled countries in Europe, with more than 30,000 landing in China. While some of them went on to other countries, Shanghai and other Chinese cities were still sheltering about 25,000 Jewish refugees when the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, more than the total population of Jewish refugees in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India put together. Why did the Jews pick China, especially Shanghai, as their Promised Land? This question has long obsessed the academia, as it involves a complex series of factors, and should be viewed from multiple perspectives, including the international context, the history of the Jews in China, the common ground of the Chinese and Jewish cultures, and the special status of Shanghai at that time.

### 1.1 Jewish Refugees Coming to China: The International Background

Adolf Hitler rose to power in early 1933 and started the crazy anti-Semitic movement very soon. The twelve years from 1933 to 1945 has witnessed the madness intensifying by three phases. Phase I (1933–1938): Issuing a series of anti-Semitic decrees to carry out all-round persecution on German Jews in political, economic and cultural fields; Phase II (1938–1941): Applying their anti-Semitic decrees to the annexed countries and implementing action plans encompassing the deportation and segregation of Jews; and Phase III (1941–1945): Taking the “Final Solution” to murder all Jews.

Facing the exodus of Jews from Europe, the world did not take positive action. Except for issuing some sympathetic statements, most countries just stood by and did nothing. As the number of Jewish refugees soared, many countries even applied strict limit to or even refused the entry of Jews, including those economically developed countries.

Their apathy was due to various factors, of which the most important one was the global economic crisis in the 1930s. The American Great Depression has led to global economic recession and social unrest, forcing all the governments to focus on their own domestic problems. In fact, the capitalist world was pervaded by isolationism and egoism. This was why some countries remained indifferent towards the Holocaust and the exodus of Jews and regarded Jewish refugees as an unnecessary burden. In 1938, a conference was held in Evian, France to discuss and address the problem of Jewish emigration from Nazi Germany. It was the hope of many that these countries could find a way to open their doors to allow more than their usual quotas of immigrants into their countries. Instead, although they commiserated with the plight of the Jews under the Nazis, every country but one refused to allow in more immigrants. The American politician Walter Mondale eloquently summed up the conference's failure 40 years after the fact:

At stake at Evian were both human lives – and the decency and self-respect of the civilized world. If each nation at Evian had agreed on that day to take in 17,000 Jews at once, every Jew in the Reich could have been saved. As one American observer wrote, “It is heartbreaking to think of the ...desperate human beings ... waiting in suspense for what happens at Evian. But the question they underline is not simply humanitarian ... it is a test of civilization.”

Of course, the Nazis' threat of war was also a major concern. In the 1930s, while the rise of German, Italian and Japanese Fascism posed increasing threat to the world, the UK, France and other old empires adopted the policy of appeasement towards the fascist regime in order to maintain their own sphere of influence. Neutral countries like Switzerland and Sweden managed foreign affairs with great discretion for fear of offending the Nazi Germany. As Hitler attached great importance to anti-Semitism in Germany's national security strategy, any action in favor of Jews would be viewed as offense to Germany.

In addition to these factors on the global scale, each country might have their own domestic issues that shaped their attitudes towards the Jews. The following analysis will focus on the countries that were relevant with the Jewish issue and the issues affecting their attitudes.

First, the UK, France and other western European countries and their colonies. In the 1930s, the UK and France were heavily hit by the global recession. Statistics show that the industrial output of the UK and France dropped by 23 and 36.2% respectively from the peak before the crisis, and the UK suffered severe unemployment, with about 3 million jobless in 1932. The recession had also affected other western European countries severely, and they were struggling to recover. To address the economic problem, European countries either tried to shift their burdens to their colonies and dependent states, or carried out deflationary policies, cut expenses to balance their budgets. It is no wonder that they closed their doors to the Jewish refugees who were generally considered an extra burden. Their colonies did exactly the same. For example, the Union of South Africa had been open to European immigration for a long time but closed its door to Jews in 1936. Palestine, then under the British Mandate, also strictly controlled the quota for Jewish immigration. The UK announced support for the establishment of a Jewish “national home” in Palestine in

the Balfour Declaration of 1917, but in May 1939, the British government announced to the contrary in the White Paper of 1939 that no more than 75,000 Jewish refugees would be admitted to Palestine in the next five years, and that no further Jewish immigration would be permitted unless the Arabs of Palestine were prepared to acquiesce in it after the period of five years. Strict punishments were also imposed for illegal immigration in the White Paper. To be honest, what the British government did was understandable. In fact, the Arabs in Palestine had been angry about the British support for Zionism since the World War I, which had already caused waves of protest. The British government had to shift its policy in exchange for the Arabs' resistance against the Nazi Germany and Italy in the Middle East.

Second, the United States' attitude towards Jewish refugees. At that time, the US had the largest Jewish population in the world and had every reason to take in more Jewish refugees. However, since the mid-1930s, the US also imposed a strict quota on Jewish immigration. That was partly due to the ubiquitous isolationism which had affected the American foreign policy directly. Isolationism was equal to non-interventionism. In the USA, a desire for separateness and unilateral freedom of action had merged with national pride and a sense of continental safety to foster the policy of isolation. Although the United States maintained diplomatic relations and economic contacts abroad, it sought to restrict these as narrowly as possible in order to retain its independence and safeguard its national interests. Under the guidance of isolationism policy, the American government was reluctant to open its doors to Jewish refugees who would put the country under more economic pressure and jeopardize its relationship with Adolf Hitler. Another reason was the anti-Semitic agitation in the USA which was most felt in the 1930s when some Americans blamed Jews for the economic recession since Jews controlled the finance sector. Some even claimed that Bolshevism was a Jewish invention, so Jews were a great threat to the American society. These claims incited strong hatred against Jews. Some white politicians from the southern states demanded to limit Jews immigration and scrutinize every Jewish immigrant to the new continent. There was even anti-Semitic violence in many places. In this context, it was risky to speak for Jews, and defending the rights of the European Jews might be considered an act of betrayal to the USA.

Last, neutral countries in Europe and Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the late 1930s, neutral countries in Europe were more open and sympathetic with the Jews. They offered the Jews some humanitarian assistance, but they could not solve the problem of refugees alone. They did receive refugees but the number was rather limited. Statistics show that Spain, Portugal and Sweden had received only several dozen thousand refugees between 1933 and 1945. It was both because that their economic power during pre-war years and World War II could not support so many refugees and that they were afraid of offending Nazi Germany. As a matter of fact, the complicated international situation in Europe and worldwide plus the concern of individual nations for their own interest deterred these countries from accepting a large number of refugees. They could only secretly help refugees in a way that would not jeopardize their own national safety and interests. So, their efforts to help Jewish refugees were rather limited. Some people suggested transporting all the Jews to Asian, African and Latin American countries, such as the Philippines, Madagascar,

Kenya and Argentina. However, it did not work out well: first, these countries were poor and it would be extremely hard to raise enough money to build new shelters for the refugees there; secondly, refugees were unwilling to settle in such countries where living conditions were poor and the local culture was so different from the Jewish religion and national identity.

In such a context, China, especially Shanghai, was the hands-down choice of the desperate Jews as their haven.

## 1.2 Settlement of Jews in China Throughout History

There is also a historical reason for Jews in despair to consider China, and Shanghai in particular, as their destination. Chinese and Jews have gotten along very well in history. It had been nearly fifteen centuries since the first Jewish immigrant arrived in China and Jewish immigrants had been warmly engaged by their Chinese neighbors. For example, Jews in Kaifeng had even been assimilated and become indistinguishable from the local Chinese. In the 19th and early 20th century, when China's door was forced open, more Jews poured into China, and Shanghai gathered the largest Jewish population in China. Most importantly, Jews have never met with anti-Semitism in China. In their mind's eye, China was a friendly country.

Studies have shown Jews first arrived in China during the Tang Dynasty (618–907) and the Jewish immigration to China climaxed much later during the Song Dynasty (960–1279) and the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368). There were as many as over 5000 Jews in Kaifeng alone. Kaifeng Jews were allowed to keep and practice their faith in Judaism, which was impossible in Europe. Kaifeng Jews had their own synagogues where they worshiped in accordance with Judaism customs, facing towards the holy city of Jerusalem. Kaifeng Jews were also entitled to the equal political and cultural rights as the Han Chinese. They were allowed to take the imperial civil service examination where they could equally compete with their Han Chinese counterparts. Quite a lot of them had earned different titles, so they could engage in politics and work for the government. In business community, too, the Jews had enjoyed equal opportunities, and many of them got rich through business operation. The friendship between the local Chinese and Jews was felt in many spheres of life, particularly in marriage. One survey record shows that, among 55 Jewish families (or families of Jewish ancestry), all Jewish men were married to Han Chinese women and all Jewish women were married to Han Chinese men. It is noteworthy that intermarriage between Jews and the ethnic Hui (in fact Muslims) was even more prevalent. Kaifeng Jews had a great respect for the Chinese culture and customs. They adored the Chinese master Confucius, believing Confucianism shared many features with their religion Judaism. For example, both Judaism and Confucianism worshipped heaven and family ancestors and attached great importance to ethics and virtues. In spring and autumn, they would attend the memorial ceremony at the local Confucius temple to pay tribute to the Master. They also followed the local customs of offering sacrifices to their ancestors. As they were gradually assimilated, or converted to Confucianism,

they also gave themselves Chinese surnames. For example, the family name of Levy changed to Li, and Ezra changed to Ai. After a thousand years, Kaifeng Jews have become Chinese to a great extent. It is worthy to note that while Kaifeng Jews were leading a peaceful and happy life as an integrated part of the Chinese community, their compatriots in Europe were excluded, persecuted and even slaughtered.

As China was forced to open its door in the recent centuries, more Jews came to China and most of them settled in Hongkong, Shanghai, Harbin and Tianjin. Shanghai was a major destination for Jewish immigrants after 1840. At first, the Sephardi Jews from Britain came to Shanghai who ran businesses. Then, a large group of Russian Jews arrived in Shanghai to make a living. By the early 1930s, the Jewish community had over 5000 members belonging to Jewish communal associations and having their own synagogues, trade associations, political organizations, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, newspapers and even cemeteries. While the Jewish community in Shanghai grew, a new anti-Semitic tide surged in Europe, thus creating a striking contrast: exclusion, persecution and slaughter in Europe versus inclusion, peace and prosperity in Shanghai. Besides, Shanghai was one of the most Westernized cities in the Far East and had a large population of foreigners, which provided a comfortable cultural environment for the Jewish immigrants. That partly explained why Jews chose to flee to Shanghai when the disaster befell them in the 1930s.

It must be noted that anti-Semitism has never occurred in China while so many Jews have come and settled here. The reasons are as follows:

First, anti-Semitism originates from deep-rooted religious prejudices, which was evident in the predominantly Christian European continent. There is no ideological basis for such religious fanaticism in China. It is true that some Russians, Japanese, Nazis and the puppet regime of Manchuria controlled by the Japanese did organize anti-Semitic activities in Shanghai and Harbin, but such activities were “imported” and had basically nothing to do with the local Chinese people.

Second, since the mid-19th century, the Chinese people had gone through as many hardships as the Jews. The anti-Chinese atrocities over the past centuries bore a close resemblance to the anti-Semitic movement in Europe. Naturally, the Chinese people were sympathetic with the Jews and strongly opposed to all forms of anti-Semitism. On April 24, 1920, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, founder of the Republic of China, expressed his support for the Zionist movement in his letter to N. E. B. Ezra, founder of Shanghai Zionist Association and publisher of Israel’s Messenger.

Third, there is a big common ground between the Chinese and Jewish cultures (to be explained in the following part).

### 1.3 Common Ground Between the Chinese and Jewish Cultures

Why did China accept the Jews warmly, who were excluded and persecuted in Europe? It is not because Europe was more xenophobic than China, but because the

Jewish culture is at odds with Christianity while it has an affinity with the Chinese Confucian culture. A cultural perspective is helpful for understanding why China, in particular Shanghai, had become a sanctuary for the Jewish refugees.

Some scholars believe that, among so many cultures in the world that have gone through thousands of years of evolution, only the Chinese and Jewish cultures have withstood the test of time and kept their origins. The Jewish culture has remained faithful to Judaism in spite of the impacts from other cultures since its beginning over 5000 years ago. The religion has united all Jews throughout the world. Likewise, Confucianism, as the basis of the Chinese culture, has not faltered after so many centuries. On the contrary, many other cultures have succumbed to impacts from different or exotic cultures. For example, ancient Rome and ancient Egypt lost their luster after Christianity and Islamism took over. This underpins the affinity between the Chinese and Jewish cultures. There is more common ground between the Chinese and Jewish cultures, which explains why anti-Semitism has never affected the Chinese society.

As the Kaifeng Jews inscribed on a stone in 1489, “Our religion is just slightly different from Confucianism. We both worship the heaven, our ancestors and parents, and stress loyalty, fidelity and kindness. We both value our family and friends.” (To be explained below.)

There are three major similarities between the Chinese and Jewish cultures.

1. Valuing family ethics. In China, family ethnics date back to the slavery age and institutionalized during the Qin and Han Dynasties. A Confucian classic begins by stating that filial piety is the first and most important virtue. Confucianism has Three Cardinal Guides and Five Principles under which sons must always obey their fathers and wives must obey their husbands. Such family ethnics have been passed down from generation to generation and still have a great impact on the contemporary Chinese society. Similarly, Jews also have a long-standing tradition of advocating filial piety. For example, to “honor thy father and mother” is one of the Ten Commandments, and the Hebrews have made this commandment a law. This moral code has been passed down for thousands of years in Jewish families. Family unity is valued by both the Chinese and Jewish cultures. Extended families are commonplace in Chinese and Jewish communities. Another common family value is the emphasis on the role of the eldest son. According to the Bible, the eldest son possesses more power than his younger brothers. In a Chinese patriarchal family, the eldest son is second only to his father, and one must respect his elder brother almost as much as for his father.
2. Prioritizing education. For thousands of years, Jews have always attached great importance to education. No matter how difficult their situation might be, their tradition of respecting teachers and prioritizing education has remained robust. Chinese people also have a long history of giving priority to education. Two thousand years ago, Xunzi, an outstanding Confucian thinker, expounded the importance of learning, encouraging governments of all dynasties to be committed to education. Of course, many other nations and ethnic groups in the world also attach great value to education. Of the shared values of the Jewish and

Chinese people concerning education, two examples are as follows. First, Jews attach great importance to intellectual education. As a well-known Jewish saying goes, knowledge is the most reliable wealth. Jewish parents would exchange their wealth for a chance of good education for their kids. The literacy rate of Jews has remained very high throughout history. Even in the Dark Ages, few Jews were illiterate. In China, knowledge has also been given the utmost importance at all times. Chinese people believe knowledge is power and books are a treasure: it is better to have a great collection of books than a similar amount of cash. Second, Jews put moral education in the first place. The Old Testament: Leviticus calls for the people to “love your neighbor as yourself”, which is an evidence of the morality-centric Judaism belief, which has become a social norm of Jews. Jewish children would receive such moral education from a very young age. Similarly, Chinese people have also a long tradition of prioritizing moral education. Among others, Confucius is a typical master in ancient China who advocated moral education. His concept of morality is equal to benevolence, which has exerted a great influence on ethics education for over two thousand years.

3. Excelling in business and finance. The excellent economic performance of the Jewish and Chinese people is another common characteristic between them. Jews are well known as financiers. They were already famous as great business minds in the Middle Ages in Europe when the term “Jews” was synonymous with “merchants”. Likewise, Chinese people possess strong business acumen, and overseas Chinese are famous for their ability to create wealth in the world. In Southeast Asia, Chinese people are called “Jews of Asia”, while in China, people from Wenzhou, Shanghai and Chaozhou of Guangdong are nicknamed “Jews of China”.

Naturally, these common features between Chinese and Jewish cultures made China a big draw for Jews who were trying to flee the Holocaust.

## 1.4 Wartime Shanghai: The Special Environment

Another important reason for so many Jewish refugees to come to Shanghai and survive in the city was the special status of Shanghai at that time.

Shanghai had always been a free port in modern times. It was particularly open to Europeans and Americans. For nearly a century after 1843, international concessions in Shanghai had been transformed into “enclaves” where foreign immigrants could find their own place. A lot of refugees and political exiles had come to Shanghai to seek haven. For instance, after Japanese occupied Korea, many Korean exiles sought refuge in Shanghai and established their Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea here.

After the August 13 Incident in 1937, the Japanese militarists occupied parts of Shanghai. In consequence, the International Settlement and the French Concession of Shanghai became isolated and were only accessible by sea. China could not continue

to exercise its authority over the city because its government agencies had been evacuated. However, as the Japanese occupiers had not yet established their puppet authority in Shanghai, Japan were unable to exercise overall and effective control over Shanghai, either. Those concessions were left out and open. No formalities were required for foreigners to enter Shanghai by sea. Especially before September 1939, foreigners could enter Shanghai without visas and economic security, and they did not have to find a job in advance or submit any document like the certificate of morality issued by the Police. Shanghai was the only city in the world where anyone could enter freely, which was important for Jews from the Nazi-controlled areas. Most of them had been “prisoners” in concentration camps, mostly without visas, passports or money. Some of them were even “illegal” immigrants. It was almost impossible for those Jews to enter countries requiring normal immigration procedures, let alone those strictly enforcing quota restriction on immigration. To sum up, Shanghai was the best destination for the fleeing Jews.

In short, before and during the Holocaust, the “civilized world” closed its door to the Jews in despair, while China, a friendly country to Jews throughout history and sharing a big common ground with Jews, had its door open. Shanghai, the “paradise for adventurers” of the Far East, received tens of thousands of Jewish refugees who were able to survive the Holocaust. It is a bitter and yet memorable chapter of the history of Shanghai and the Chinese-Jewish friendship.

## Chapter 2

# Jewish Refugees Arriving in China (1933–1941): Route, Time, Number and Resettlement



Different views have been published on Chinese and international journals and other publications about the flight of Jewish Refugees to China, including their routes, time of arrival, their number and resettlement in Shanghai. Based on our research over the past years, this chapter will examine these issues by five periods.

### 2.1 From 1933 When Hitler Launched the Anti-semitic Movement in Germany to August 1937 When the Japanese Invaded Shanghai

In the first few years, German Jews had been deported since anti-Semitism surged in Nazi Germany. However, as many countries in the world did not deny Jews entry into their territories, only a few German Jews came to Shanghai, most of whom had connections with Shanghai. Some had relatives in Shanghai, some had already resided in Shanghai, while some others had worked for German enterprises which had business ties in Shanghai. In 1933, the first batch of 12 Jewish families (over a hundred people) arrived in Shanghai. The number of German Jews coming to Shanghai before the summer of 1937 was hard to calculate, as many of them went to other countries after arrival in Shanghai. It is estimated that, excluding those who headed for other destinations via Shanghai, the number of German Jews entering Shanghai during this period was somewhere between 1000 and 1500. Some scholars argue that, strictly speaking, the Jews who came to Shanghai during this period were not refugees; they were only expatriates. Nevertheless, as Hitler restarted the anti-Semitism persecution in 1933, the German Jews who arrived in Shanghai in and after 1933 had apparently tried to escape persecution and seek asylum outside Germany. In this sense, they were refugees. It is important to note that nearly all of them had been very well educated and had worked as doctors, lawyers, teachers and entrepreneurs before they fled, and they had carried some of their wealth with them. It was easy for them to find a job in Shanghai. They had a medium living standard among all

the Jews in Shanghai and usually resided in the foreign concessions. As Europe and Asia were relatively peaceful without any major warfare, they had directly fled from Germany to Shanghai by sea.

## **2.2 From August 1937 to August 1939 When Authorities of Shanghai Announced Restrictions on the Influx of Jewish Refugees**

The two years from 1937 to 1939 witnessed the massive influx of Jewish refugees from Germany and other Central and Eastern European countries into Shanghai. This was partly because anti-Semitism climaxed in Nazi Germany after the Crystal Night and spread to other European countries after Germany annexed Austria and Czechoslovakia, forcing Jews to flee from the Central Europe, and partly because the rest of the world imposed tougher restrictions on Jewish immigration, while Shanghai remained open under the special wartime circumstances. The conditions of Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai during in this period were tragic. Among the 187 Jewish refugees who arrived in Shanghai on December 1938, some had been millionaires back home Germany, but each of them was allowed to carry no more than 10 RMs in cash with them in addition to what was enough for ship tickets. Some others were even more miserable. They had managed to get away from Germany, Austria and other countries by “illegal” means, such as crossing borders illegally, getting aboard foreign ships illegally, entering other countries with short-term visas. There were three main routes to Shanghai during this period. Most went to Italy first, and then took ships to Shanghai; some entered France, Holland, Belgium and other countries first, and then took ships to Shanghai from Atlantic ports; and still some sailed through the Danube River into the Balkan countries, and then took ships to Shanghai. The number of Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai during this period was very inconsistent. Some estimates are about 15,000 people, or 17,000–19,000 people, and some come to about 20,000 people. According to our research, the former two estimates have mainly come from the refugee shelters, and are incomplete because many refugees had not gone to refugee shelters, but had stayed with their friends or relatives, or rented houses and settled down on their own; some refugees had gone to other countries not long after their arrival in Shanghai. Including these refugees, the total number of Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai during this period should be somewhere between 21,000 and 22,000.

Facing the virtually penniless refugees, the Jewish community of Shanghai and some international relief organizations took quick actions. In 1934, some German Jews already settled and prosperous in Shanghai set up a relief fund which offered aid to the first batch of Jewish refugees from Austria. However, the massive influx of refugees rendered the relief fund insufficient. Therefore, in August 1938, the Sephardi Jews set up the International Committee for Granting Relief to European Refugees (IC), and as it was chaired by the Polish Jew Paul Komor, IC was also

known as the Komor Committee. The Abraham family, together with another prominent Jewish family in Shanghai, opened a public kitchen, Sir Ellice Victor Sassoon offered the Embankment Building as a temporary shelter, and the Beth Aharon Synagogue also set up a kitchen and refugee reception station. In order to strengthen the coordination of the relief work, in October 1938, Horace Kadoorie called a meeting of representatives of the Jewish community in Shanghai and international assistance organizations and established the Committee for Assistance of European Refugees in Shanghai (CFA). On the board of directors of CFA, the representatives of the Sephardi Jews were Mendell Brown, D. E. J. Abraham and his son Reuben D. Abraham, the representatives of the Russian Jews were Rabbi Meir Ashkennaz, L. Greenberg and H. Kammerling, and the representatives of the German Jews were Dr. B Rosenberg and Dr. Kurt Marx. Later on, CFA was also called the Speelman Committee, since it was chaired by Michel Speelman. By the end of that year, CFA had raised about 8000 USD. In January 1939, Sir Ellice Victor Sassoon donated 150,000 USD as the Rehabilitation Fund, IC. Some other Jewish merchants, such as Kadoorie, Hayim and Josef, had also established some funds to help refugees start their own businesses and strengthen their self-reliance. Since January 1939, CFA had set up some refugee shelters on Alcock Road (now Anguo Road), Chaofoong Road (now Gaoyang Road), Seward Road (now Changzhi Road), Ward Road (now Changyang Road) and Way-side Road (now Huoshan Road). There were a lot of external donations from the international Jewish community. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) made the largest donation and HICEM was very generous, too. In 1938, HICEM set up an office in Shanghai, and moved its Far East branch from Harbin to Shanghai in 1939 to provide such services as liaison, consulting and loans to the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. In the same year, the JDC Shanghai Office was established, and had played an important role in helping the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. According to the statistics, the JDC Shanghai Office had provided the majority of funding for the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. In addition, expatriates from different countries in Shanghai, churches and other non-Jewish aid or charity organizations, such as London Missionary Society, Young Men's Christian Association of Shanghai (YMCA) and American orphanages, also donated money and houses to help the Jewish refugees.

The Jewish refugees coming to Shanghai during this period had been mostly settled in Hongkou, a war-hit area at the cross of the International Settlement, the Japanese Concession and the Chinese section where the prices were 30% lower than the rest of the city and the house rental was 75% lower than the International Settlement and the French Concession. While some rented their own homes, most refugees lived in temporary refugee shelters, where 30–50 people crowded in a big room, and the most crowded rooms had 100–200 people. The refugees could not find formal jobs, so they took some odd jobs, such as sending coal briquettes, repairing appliances, baking bread and selling newspapers. Depending on their business talent, some Jewish refugees became street vendors and some others opened small shops in Hongkou. Later, as the influx of Jewish refugees relaxed a bit, the conditions there improved, and some even moved to the International Settlement and the French Concession.

## 2.3 From August 1939 to June 1940 When Italy Declared War on the UK and France

The surging population of Jewish refugees disturbed life in Concessions, raising complaints among the residents and causing concern to the authorities. For example, a rumor spread that the China General Omnibus Company, a business of the Sassoon family, had planned to fire its Russian employees and hire Jews in their place, which spurred an unrest among the Russian immigrants. The authorities were afraid that the influx of Jewish refugees would incur a heavy financial and employment pressure and cause public security problems. At the same time, the Jewish community in Shanghai also feared that the number of refugees would grow beyond their aiding capacity. Therefore, both the governing authorities and the Jewish community thought of curbing Jewish immigration to Shanghai. On May 25, 1939, even the richest Jews, Sassoon and Hayim, said they would be glad if the influx of Jewish refugees could be checked in some way.

Meanwhile, as the influx of refugees in Hongkou drove up house rental and business competition, the Japanese residents there urged the Japanese authorities to take measures to stem Jewish immigration. Therefore, in August 1939, the Shanghai Municipal Council, the French Municipal Administrative Council, and the Japanese Authorities reached an agreement: for European Jewish refugees holding passports stamped with "J", authorization for landing should be given to those: (1) having an entry permit issued by the said authorities; (2) possessing available for use in Shanghai, not less than 400 USD in the case of an adult, or not less than 100 USD in the case of a child of less than 13 years of age; (3) having immediate family relations residing in Shanghai; or (4) having a contract of employment with a resident in Shanghai or intending to contract marriage with a resident of Shanghai. In consequence, Jews without the entry permit could no longer get tickets to Shanghai from European shipping companies, and those who were already on their way to Shanghai were caught in a dilemma.

The number of Jewish refugees fleeing Europe soared due to the outbreak of World War II, especially after Nazi Germany occupied Poland that had the largest Jewish community in Europe. Jewish organizations around the world hastened to assist the refugees. That's why still a large crowd of Jewish refugees came to Shanghai through various channels, in spite of all the restrictions. To make the situation even worse, the UK declared war on Germany, and thus hundreds of German Jews in Hong Kong and Singapore were forced to leave and they finally landed in Shanghai. It is ironic to note that, according to Hitler's decree of September 15, 1935, those Jews had been deprived of their German citizenship. During this period, the number of Jewish refugees reaching Shanghai still amounted to 2000–3000, although it was a sharp drop from the previous period. Apart from Germany and Austria, these new Jewish refugees were also from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and the Baltic states. Their travel routes and resettlement in Shanghai were similar to the previous periods.

## 2.4 From June 1940 to June 1941 When Germany Invaded the Soviet Union

This year is singled out as a separate period as the routes of Jewish flight to Shanghai shifted after Italy declared war on both the UK and France in June 1940. France was soon defeated and surrendered to Germany. Later, the UK on one side and Germany and Italy on the other side engaged in fierce sea and air battles in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and the fire spilled over to the Balkans, North Africa and West Asia. Consequently, the sea routes Jewish refugees had traditionally taken to Shanghai were all cut off. At the same time, Western European countries including France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg, and the Balkan countries including Yugoslavia and Greece fell into the hands of Nazi Germany. The three Baltic states, threatened by the Nazis, were then annexed by the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the Nazis extended their anti-Semitic program to Poland and other Eastern European countries. European Jews were driven to despair. They tried to flee, but fewer were able to get away.

Many Jews again picked Shanghai as their destination, but they had to travel by land across Siberia and then northeastern China, Korea or Japan. Most of them were Jews from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Czechoslovakia. Several months later, they finally arrived in Shanghai against all dangers and difficulties. It is estimated that the number of Jewish refugees reaching Shanghai during this period was around 2000. It is worth noting that in March 1941, with the support of JDC, Eastern European Jews and Russian Jews in Shanghai set up the Committee for Assistance of Eastern European Jews (EASTJEWCOM or EJC). In addition, the Polish government-in-exile established in Shanghai the Organization for Polish Refugees in Wartime China, and elected an executive committee for the Organization. The accommodation conditions provided for these new Jewish refugees were much better because their number was much smaller.

## 2.5 From June 1941 to December 8, 1941 When the Pacific War Broke Out

After Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, the land routes to Shanghai were also cut off, so no more Jewish refugees were able to get away from Europe. At that time, about 2000 Jewish refugees, mostly from Poland and Lithuania, had already reached the Russian Far East, northeastern China, and Japan, but could not go anywhere due to the intensified war and restrictions on immigration. They finally managed to come to Shanghai.

The experience of more than 1100 Polish Jews on their way to Shanghai is especially noteworthy, including 400 teachers and students of the Mir Yeshiva and the Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva. In 1939 when Germany invaded Poland, they fled to Lithuania, and then thought of obtaining transit visas for Japan with their bogus

visas for the Dutch Curacao, and then obtaining in Japan visas for the USA. Thanks to the support of Sugihara Chiune, the Japanese Consul General in Lithuania, they finally got the transit visas. Later, they got exit permission from the Soviet Union government (Lithuania was part of the Soviet Union at that time), and took the train across Siberia to Vladivostok where they left for Kobe via a Soviet Union travel agency which charged 200 USD per person. After staying in Kobe for more than six months, they failed to obtain the visas for the USA, but got the permission to travel to Shanghai with the help of Zorach Warhaftig, representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

Arriving in Shanghai in late 1941, they were the last batch of Jewish refugees entering Shanghai before the Attack on Pearl Harbor. Though their number was small, they played an important role in the religious sphere of the Jewish community in Shanghai as they had abundant cultural and religious knowledge. Many of them were rabbis, or teachers and students of Jewish religious institutions. Sugihara Chiune, however, was fired by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs because he had issued visas to the Jews against government wills, and spent the rest of his life in misery. In 1985, shortly before his death, he was honored by the government of Israel as the Righteous Among the Nations.

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, it became impossible for Jewish refugees to reach Shanghai by sea, since the sea-borne routes to Shanghai were all cut off. As the Eurasia continent was caught in the war, it was also impossible to travel to Shanghai by land. Therefore, very few Jewish refugees had arrived in Shanghai since then.

## Annex: The Number of Jewish Refugees in Shanghai

### Wang Jian

The year 2015 marked the 70th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. Seventy years ago, Chinese people won the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression at a high price, and also made significant contributions to the full victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. Among its contributions, China saved about 30,000 European Jews from the Holocaust.

At that time, Chinese people showed great sympathy to the Jews in Europe, although they suffered from the Japanese aggression and had to struggle for survival just like the Jewish refugees. In 1933, Madam Song Qingling, together with a delegation of the China League for the Protection of Civil Rights, wrote a letter of protest to the German Consulate General in Shanghai, condemning Hitler's anti-Semitic violence. In February 1939, Sun Ke, Madam Song's step son and legislative head of the Republic of China, proposed establishing a Jewish settlement in Yunnan for Jewish refugees entering China. From 1933 to 1941, Shanghai received a high number of Jewish refugees. According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center, which

specializes in Holocaust studies, Shanghai had taken in more Jewish refugees than Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India put together.

However, the number of Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai has divided the international academia and the community of former Jewish refugees. Some have even accused the Chinese media of exaggerating the number. This paper looks specially into this issue, based on articles and reports of *Israel's Messenger*, the mainstream newspaper published by Jews in China at that time concerning the number of Jewish refugees in Shanghai.

## ***Early Jewish Refugees in Shanghai***

The first Jewish refugee came to Shanghai in 1933, but the number was small even though Hitler had launched the anti-Semitic movement in Germany. It was partly because the German Jews didn't clearly recognize the threat and also because the neighboring European countries were the major destinations for Jewish refugees. Of those who came to Shanghai, most had a connection here, such as having relatives or having once lived in Shanghai, or having worked for German employers with business ties in Shanghai. In 1933, the first batch of German Jews arrived in Shanghai on a Lloyd Triestino liner to Wayside Wharf. They were 12 families with over one hundred members in total. Until the summer of 1938, the number of German Jews fleeing to Shanghai had remained small at around 1000, some of whom went on to other Chinese cities or other countries.

Some scholars argue that, strictly speaking, the Jews arriving in Shanghai from 1933 to 1938 were not refugees; they were merely immigrants or expatriates. On the other hand, some other scholars claim that these Jews should be counted as refugees, since they had come to Shanghai to escape Hitler's anti-Semitic persecution that started in early 1933. German Jews arriving in Shanghai during this period were mostly intellectuals. A lot of them were doctors, lawyers, teachers and entrepreneurs, and had brought some wealth with them to Shanghai. Therefore, it is relatively easy for them to find jobs or start their own business in Shanghai. They enjoyed medium living standards among the Jews in Shanghai and resided in foreign concessions.

On October 1, 1933, *Israel's Messenger* reported that 10 best German Jewish doctors were heading to Shanghai, according to the information the newspaper had received. By the end of 1933, about 30 German Jewish doctors had immigrated to Shanghai, most of whom had been distinguished back at home and opened their clinics in Shanghai afterwards. Among them, there was a neurologist of St. George Hospital and author of many medical books.

Another doctor, descendant of a Berlin-based publishing tycoon, enjoyed a very high reputation in Berlin in the circle of pediatrics and had worked as chief physician for a leading pediatric clinic which provided about 4000 outpatient services every month. Still another was a dentist and oral surgeon who had served the German army during World War I as head of a front-line medical station and was awarded the Iron

Cross. After the War, he was engaged as director of the department of dentistry of a public hospital. Their arrival was good news to the Shanghai Jewish community.

N. E. B. Ezra, founder and chief editor of *Israel's Messenger*, as well as founder and leader of the Shanghai Zionist Association, gave a family reception to welcome these newly-arrived German Jewish doctors at 6 Taiping Garden. When the first wave of German Jewish exodus swept the world, only a few Jews dared to travel to China. These “pioneers” were mainly professionals who had enjoyed a decent life in China and settled down mainly in Shanghai, Hankou, Beijing and Nanjing.

Since August 1938, as the Nazi persecution against Jews went crazy and spread to Austria, Czechoslovakia and other European countries annexed by Nazi Germany, a great number of Jews had fled Germany and Central European Countries to seek for havens. Here are some reports of Israel's Messenger from August to October 1938.

“After the annexation of Austria, 15 Austrian Jews left for Shanghai on Conte Biancamano of Lloyd Triestino on August 15, 1938. They were the wealthy class in Vienna, but they were allowed to bring 20 RMs per person on board. They were greeted at the wharf in Shanghai by a relief organization. They looked sad and miserable. It is a pity that Jews have suffered from Nazi persecution and were forced to leave their homeland.”

“On August 28, another 10 Austrian Jewish refugees, including one women and two children, arrived in Shanghai from Italy onboard SS Conte Rosso of Lloyd Triestino. The refugees who arrived in Shanghai two weeks ago greeted them and took them to their shelters. These refugees experienced the same difficulties as the first batch of refugees, as they had only 20 RMs with them when they left Germany. They were penniless upon arrival in Shanghai and could not even afford the traffic expenses on their way to the shelters.”

“On September 11, six Jewish refugees, one German doctor and five Austrians, arrived in Shanghai onboard the Lloyd Triestino liner Victoria. Among them were three businessmen, one engineer and the wife of one of the three businessmen.”

“On October 18, 25 Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria took the Lloyd Triestino liner Conte Biancamano to Shanghai, including 19 men, 5 women and one child. A few of them could speak English but most of them had the financial problem.”

### ***The Number of Shanghai Jewish Refugees Surging After the Kristallnacht***

After the Kristallnacht in November 1938, German and Austrian Jews who found their dream shattered began to escape from the Nazis. But they were not as lucky as those who had gone before them, because the Nazis intensified their plunder of Jews' wealth and only allowed them to keep a little money. Among the 187 Jewish refugees who arrived in Shanghai in December 1938, many had been millionaires before they fled, but they were only permitted to take what was enough for ship tickets and an

additional 10 RMs. The Chinese and international newspapers in Shanghai at that time, especially the Israel's Messenger, recorded the situation of the Jewish refugees landing at Wayside Wharf:

“180 German and Austrian Jews took the Italian ship the Ford and arrived in Shanghai on November 24. They looked very sad when they went through the customs. They took very little luggage with them because, for most refugees from Berlin, their belongings may have been confiscated at the German border as they had too much cash with them. When they arrived in Trieste after two days, they were told that the rest of their luggage was in another ship, so most refugees had nothing with them but handbags. One of these refugees had apparently been sent to concentration camps before. He still had a thick white bandage on his forehead and kept silent. A man next to him told North China Daily News that his head got hurt in Buchenwald and, by the way, most of the German Jews who arrived in Shanghai had spent some time there, from 10 weeks to 3 years. Most of the refugees came from Germany and only 30% were from Austria. There was an eye-catching red letter J on their passports. The luckiest one of these Jewish refugees had 3 RMs and the majority were penniless. It would be difficult for them to find jobs very soon, but they should not be considered as a burden on the Jewish community in Shanghai as they have brought spiritual wealth to the city. In fact, a lot of them were highly reputed doctors back home. The committee in charge of taking care of these refugees has rented the British Women’s Center at 708 Whasing Road (now Xuchang Road) in Hongkou, and turned it into a shelter which can house about 50 people.”

“524 German Jewish refugees arrived at Wayside Wharf on December 20 on Conte Biancamano. This is the largest wave of international refugees to Shanghai since the Russian immigration from 1918 to 1922. In fact, 526 refugees had been expected, but two had gone to Hong Kong and Manila halfway. The assistance organizations did a good job, arranging the refugees in several lines and sending them in groups to different refugee shelters. There were about 120 children. Many Jewish families who had already been crowded in small apartments offered to take care of one or two kids until their parents settled down. Most of these families are from Russia and they are not rich.”

“On December 31, 400 German Jews arrived in Shanghai onboard two Lloyd Triestino liners. The number of refugees surprised the Jewish assistance organizations, because they were expecting only 300. About 120 refugees got off the Potsdam instead of 70 and the number of passengers disembarking from the Rosso rose from 240 to 280. There were 28 kids. Most of these refugees were sent to the Embankment Building, but the children needed special care from the settled Jewish families, too. Many parents refused to separate from their young kids at first, but gradually, they found it reasonable to entrust their kids to the local Jewish families before they were able to provide warm and comfortable homes for them.”

“On January 14, 1939, about 50 European Jewish refugees arrived at Wayside Wharf. They travelled across Russia by the trans-Siberian rail and then took the Japanese liner Sansho from Dalian.”

“On January 15, around 250 German and Austrian Jewish refugees disembarked from the Victoria, in Shanghai. Jewish assistance organizations greeted them at Way-

side Wharf where the majority landed and led them to refugee shelters in Hongkew or near the Wharf.”

“On January 29, the liner Ford arrived in Shanghai, bringing another group of 420 Jewish refugees to this city. They were temporarily accommodated in the Embankment Building and the Beth Aharon Synagogue where they could sleep on the floor. Some people could have only two meals a day. Up to now, Shanghai has received 2305 refugees, 400 of whom can support themselves. Jewish assistance organizations are under great pressure, as still 1905 people need help.”

“On February 10, at least 85 German Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard the French liner Athos II. It was reported that they had secretly crossed the German border and fled to Marseille, France, and then travelled to Shanghai by sea. They were temporarily accommodated in the Embankment Building. Meanwhile, it is predicted that 850 Jewish refugees will arrive in Shanghai on February 21 on board the Lloyd Triestino liner Conte Biancamano. By that time, the total number of refugees in Shanghai will reach 3155.”

“On February 24, again 85 German and Austrian Jewish refugees arrived at Way-side Wharf onboard a German liner Scharnhorst.”

“On March 5, 450 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai on board SS Conte Rosso. As usual, Jewish relief organizations met them at the Wharf and helped them through the customs while many trucks were waiting for them at the entrance. Some of these refugees were sent to the Embankment Building and some lone travelers were taken to the shelter on Ward Road which can accommodate 1200 people. Now, about 4500 German and Austrian Jews are living in Shanghai and refugees fleeing the Holocaust continue to flood into this city. There are 3945 Jewish refugees registered with CFA, but not all refugees have been put on record. Moreover, hundreds of Jewish refugees in Shanghai have not contacted CFA since they can take care of themselves with financial support from their friends in Shanghai or other countries. Apart from the first floor of the Embankment Building, CFA runs three refugee shelters, each accommodating about 1000 people.”

“Still 400 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai on April 3, the eve of Passover. Their promised land, however, is a temporary shelter in a school on Ward Road, rather than Palestine. Meanwhile, the head of that refugee camp was waiting at the Wharf for his wife and kids who were in the crowd. Victor Sassoon was filming people at the customs who were anxiously waiting for refugees.”

“But the real problem will come in the future. It is estimated that, on average, 3000 people are leaving their homes as refugees each month, but more than 3000 refugees will arrive in Shanghai this month. Three liners are bringing European refugees to Shanghai. Lloyd Triestino’s Giulio Cesare will carry 1600 Jews from Central Europe to Shanghai. Two German liners carrying about 1500 Jewish refugees will arrive in Shanghai via the Cape of Good Hope. The German ships have been rented by the German Gestapo to deport German Jews. Although every refugee has paid 2000 RMs, the liners had to go around the Cape of Good Hope, as they couldn’t afford the Suez Canal tolls.”

“The final number of Jews taking refuge in Shanghai is estimated to reach 13,000. The way that Jewish refugees assistance organizations have provided food and

accommodation for these refugees looks like a miracle. Assistance organizations has aided about 7000 Jewish refugees through leasing houses and raising donations. The arrival of three liners transporting Jewish refugees this month doesn't mean the end of immigration. Still other Jewish refugees will arrive on board other ships. Lloyd Triestino liners will bring at least 300 to 500 Jews to Shanghai every two weeks. In order to help the German Jews stand on their own feet, CFA has also set up a special fund amounting to 170,000 USD, of which 150,000 USD came from Victor Sassoon. Up to now, 350 Jewish refugees have their own business and 690 immigrants have become financially independent (including dependent family members). Meanwhile, 392 other immigrants have got self-reliant by finding employment or benefitting from private funding in Shanghai. While 6000 refugees still depend on the aid of assistance organizations, financially independent refugees have reached 20% of the total. But this ratio would have been much lower without the special fund."

"On April 25, 220 Jewish refugees arrived at Wayside Wharf on board the Japanese liner Hakusaku Maru and the German liner Gneisenau. At the same time, 850 people came to Shanghai on board Conte Biancamano. The total number of Jewish refugees in Shanghai has gone up to 8400."

"On May 8, 440 Jews, including 50 children, arrived at Wayside Wharf on board Conte Rosso from Germany. Most of the refugees from Berlin, Vienna and Hamburg are men who were released from concentration camps and forced to leave Germany. Their families were already in Shanghai, with just a few exceptions. At first, the Nazis allowed Jews to carry their clothes and other belongings when they were expelled from Germany, but new refugees could only take a handbag with them."

"On May 14, 738 German Jews arrived at Wayside Wharf on board Giulio Cesare. The refugees looked relaxed when they disembarked and went through the customs. They said the ship had not stopped at Singapore or Hong Kong, but had gone directly from Colombo to Shanghai. They said the journey was still pleasant, as Giulio Cesare was one of the best equipped liners of Lloyd Triestino available for rental. It had two outdoor swimming pools. As the tickets for German liners and Lloyd Triestino had been sold out before October, they rented Giulio Cesare."

"As one of the refugees said, it had been difficult to get a ticket even for Giulio Cesare. At that time, they had to pay up to double the regular fare to get a ticket, although they had all necessary documents and official approvals. The arrival of new refugees drives up the number of refugees in Shanghai to 9578. Many of them came to be reunited with their families who had arrived in Shanghai earlier. Among these new refugees, 100 stayed in the shelter on Wayside Road (now Huoshan Road), 100 in the shelter on Ward Road (now Changyang Road), 120 in the former HSBC building in Hongkew, 260 in the shelter on Chaofong Road (now Gaoyang Road), and the rest in the Embankment Building. Meanwhile, to address the shortage of accommodation space, CFA is planning to build larger refugee shelters for 25,000 refugees expected to arrive later this year. The Refugee Registration Office is on the third floor of 190 Jiujiang Road. Every refugee must register their key personal information and provide a photo. They will carry one copy of the registration card while the Office keeps another. This is intended to help the Police better control the refugee population."

“On May 19, the German liner SMS Scharnhorst arrived in Shanghai with 155 Jewish refugees, including 45 couples and 24 children. Their accommodation in Shanghai has been arranged. It is said that two other German liners, rented specially to transport refugees, will bring more via South Africa and Java to Shanghai. They have taken the longer route to save the Suez Canal tolls, for which only British pounds are accepted while the refugees had only RMs. The first liner is scheduled to arrive in Shanghai on June 24 with 461 refugees, and the second liner with 450 to 500 refugees is expected in mid-July. CFA has obtained from Shanghai Municipal Council the use right for two schools which will accommodate up to 1400 refugees after refurbishment. As CFA estimated, about 3000 refugees will arrive in Shanghai each month from June to September, so more refugee shelters are needed. After these refugees arrive, the total of Jewish refugees in Shanghai will come to 21,000.”

“On May 22, 308 Jewish refugees arrived on board Victoria.”

“On June 4, 465 Jewish refugees arrived at Wayside Wharf on board Ford. Jewish assistance organizations sent them to shelters after they landed. Most people went to the shelter on Kinchow Road, while others were taken to shelters on Ward Road, Chafoong Road, Wayside Road and the Embankment Building. It is estimated that the total number of Jewish refugees in Shanghai by now is 10,506.”

“On June 27, 862 Jewish refugees arrived at Wayside Wharf on board two liners, pushing the total number of European refugees in Shanghai beyond 12,000.

Among the new Jewish refugees, 827 came on board the Llyod Triestino liner Conte Biancamano, and 35 onboard a French Messageries Maritimes liner. Except for 100 of them who had found private residences, they were all accommodated in refugee shelters. On June 28, 459 refugees arrived on a rented German liner USA Ramo, including 114 couples, 150 children, 142 single men and 33 single women.”

“On August 7, another batch of 265 Jews arrived on board HMS Victoria and were taken to refugee shelters near Wayside Road. The total number of European refugees in Shanghai has exceeded 16,000.”

In short, from August 1938 to early August 1939, 16,000 European Jews came to Shanghai as refugees. The Sephardi Jews and Russian Ashkenazi Jews who had already settled here were just about one-third of the Jewish refugee population.

### ***Jewish Immigration After the Imposition of Restrictions in August 1939***

The relatives of Jewish refugees in Shanghai had made every effort to help them, but the burden on relief organizations still got beyond their capacity as at least 12,000 more refugees were expected to arrive by the end of 1939. Problems had already emerged due to insufficient staffing and financial resources. In May 1939, scarlet fever broke out and soon ran rampant in Jewish refugee shelters, affecting over 200 people. More than 150 patients were sent to the emergency hospital on Chafoong

Road (now Gaoyang Road) and the others were housed in other hospitals in the concessions.

As Shanghai was unable to cope with the influx of refugees and consequential crisis, the Jewish community in Shanghai proposed restrictions on refugees entering the city. They had not expected the Holocaust. Meanwhile, they urged Jewish communities from other countries to provide more accommodation and economic aid to the Jewish refugees. Michel Speelman, general manager of the International Savings Society and also chairman of CFA, warned Shanghai Municipal Council and the Municipal Administrative Council of the Shanghai French Concession that the continuing influx of refugees would bring threats to Shanghai and that if the situation worsened, the Municipal Council would have to bear the responsibility to protect the Jewish population in the Shanghai International Settlement. So, the authorities should try to check the entry of refugees who had lost their savings or had no job prospects. He also urged the European consuls in Shanghai to inform shipping companies from their country of the proposed restrictions. Anxiety was also provoked among the Russian Jews who took unskilled jobs for low pay, because they feared new refugees would compete with them for jobs. In May 1939, Victor Sassoon told the Japanese authorities that a proper control over the influx of Jewish refugees was badly needed, or otherwise the Jewish community in Shanghai would feel threatened and become restless. Meanwhile, daily life in the concessions and public administration were disturbed as European refugees flooded into the city. Complaints rose among the concession residents and the authorities were worried. To make things worse, a rumor spread the China General Omnibus Company, a business of the Sassoon family, had planned to fire its Russian employees and hire Jews in their place, which spurred a panic and even anti-Semitism among the Russian immigrants. A pamphlet was published by an anti-Semitism organization under the title: *A Warning for the Chinese, Japanese and Pagans: Refugees Are Invading Shanghai* and its subtitle was *Get Ready for Economic Invasion and the Era of Crime, Violence and Plot*. It said, "Shanghai has suddenly become the paradise of the people who had attempted to cause destruction to Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia while had exploited the workers there. They claim to be Hitler's 'victims', but they are now flocking to Shanghai with their pockets full of cash. Who would really believe these Jews? Their propaganda says Hitler is trying to transport Jews out of Austria and Germany, but they are traveling in first or at least second-class cabins and rent expensive homes here and there. In the meantime, they're urging the international community in Shanghai to give them foods and jobs. We'd have ignored their claim, but we find all at once that there are so many 'refugees' hanging on streets with cameras, frequently visiting banks, gobbling dessert in cafes, and eating in expensive restaurants. Just imagine how those dedicated to helping Chinese and Russian refugees will be surprised. Because the Jewish community just begged them to help the 'poor refugees' from Germany and Austria."

Concerns among expatriates in Shanghai over job competition were clearly stated in an article *Our Economy Is Under Threat of Jewish Refugees: European Exiles Are Becoming the Fourth Type of Foreigners in China* published by Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury. The authorities of the International Settlement and foreign conces-

sions also feared that the influx of Jewish refugees would create enormous financial and employment pressure and cause unrest. Some rich people from the West also feared that the German and Austrian Jews might damage the noble and dignified image of the white people, for the Jews would take manual jobs that had traditionally been done by the Chinese.

Meanwhile, as a large number of refugees entered Shanghai and the vast majority of them settled in Hongkou, a Japanese settlement, rental went up sharply and business competition intensified there. The Japanese residents urged the Japanese government to take counter actions. In an official document, therefore, the Japanese Foreign Ministry declared that Japanese nationals must be saved from the impact of Jewish immigrants. After 64 Jews came to Shanghai onboard of the NYK liner Suwa Maru and again settled in Hongkou on July 16, 1939, the Japanese authorities announced that no more Jewish refugees would be allowed to move into Hongkou. However, the Japanese authorities also feared that such a restriction might offend American and British Jews and affect the Fugu plan. The demand of the Jewish community in Shanghai to limit Jewish immigration was a great opportunity for the Japanese authorities to exert their restriction, and they had the excuse that it was a CFA decision.

On August 9, 1939, the Japanese authorities issued a policy paper to restrict the immigration of European Jews to Shanghai. Later, at a press conference, a reporter doubted whether Japan had any right to impose such a restriction in the areas north of the Suzhou River. The Japanese spokesman replied with arrogance: “The International Settlement is now largely under Japanese control, so we have the right to enact laws as necessary. Moreover, we have already informed the consulate general of Germany, Italy and many other countries in Shanghai.” He then added that the influx of Jewish refugees would threaten the life of residents north of the Suzhou River and that the restriction reflected the opinions of the Jewish organizations in Shanghai. Not including the refugees in temporary shelters, the Jewish population in that area was one tenth of the local Japanese population, so the Japanese authorities feared that frictions would arise between the two expatriate communities.

The Japanese Navy headquarters also stated explicitly in a memorandum to the Jewish assistance organizations in Shanghai that Jewish refugees who arrived after August 21 must not be settled in Hongkou. For humanitarian considerations, the Japanese authorities did not impose any restrictions immediately on Jewish refugees in the area under their control, but they decided to check new immigration, as the Battle of 1937 had damaged a lot of housing facilities in that area. New Jewish immigration would be suspended until new solutions were available to accommodate new refugees. The memorandum demanded a directory of Jewish refugees in Shanghai, by which the Japanese authorities would issue an identification card to each approved registrant and only refugees with this identification card were allowed to run a business on the north of the Suzhou River. Jewish refugees who had already settled in Hongkou must register with the Japanese authorities before August 22, or they would be considered as illegal immigrants and forced out of the area.

On August 14, Shanghai Municipal Council also informed all foreign consulates and international shipping companies that European refugees were no more allowed

to enter the International Settlement of Shanghai and took strict measures to prevent refugees from landing. An official of the Council said that the number of Jewish refugees who had come to Shanghai had reached 16,000 and by the end of that year 5000 more might arrive. As the Jewish refugees had been banned from settling in the area north of the Suzhou River, the newly-arrived refugees had to live in the southern area which was even worse hit by the Battle of 1937 and more crowded than the northern area. In fact, Shanghai could not accept more refugees due to the extreme shortage of housing and medical facilities. Any epidemic outbreak would be disastrous. When scarlet fever hit the northern area a couple of months ago, the disease was brought under control just because there were enough hospitals and refugees were able to nurse their sick compatriots. If a similar disease affected the refugees in the southern area, the result would be completely different since all the existing hospitals were already overcrowded and no building was available to be used as a hospital. The official also pointed out that this ban did not apply to the European Jews who were already on board or otherwise on their way to Shanghai. The number of refugees on their way to Shanghai was not exactly predictable until the liners arrived in Hong Kong.

After Shanghai Municipal Council made the decision to limit Jewish immigration to Shanghai, the French Consulate General also issued a ban on new Jewish settlement in the French Concession. All international shipping companies that ran liners to Shanghai were informed of the new restrictions.

The Jewish organizations in Shanghai transmitted the restrictions issued by the Japanese authorities on August 9 and Shanghai Municipal Council on August 14 to the German Jews Leaders in London which forwarded the message to JDC, asking to stop Jewish immigration from Europe to Shanghai. In Germany and Italy, shipping companies posted notices in an attempt to discourage Jews from travelling to Shanghai, warning them of China's bleak economic prospect. The bans were published by the local newspapers on August 16, and it is not difficult to imagine how worried the Jewish refugees in Shanghai were, especially those who had relatives that were about to embark on a journey or already on their way to Shanghai. Those who had booked tickets after August 14 had to ask the shipping companies for refund. However, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) was told later that four liners carrying 631 passengers scheduled to depart from August 14 to 21 were allowed to dock in Shanghai. Even so, the Jewish refugees in Shanghai were still laden with worry. They tried to negotiate secretly with every administrative authority in Shanghai, attempt to change the regulations. Finally, an agreement was reached with Shanghai Municipal Council and published on October 22.

Under the agreement, the ban issued by Shanghai Municipal Council in August was not applicable to Jews: 1. possessing available for use in Shanghai, not less than 400 USD in the case of an adult, or not less than 100 USD in the case of a child of less than 13 years of age; 2. having immediate family relations residing in Shanghai; or 3. having a contract of employment with a resident in Shanghai or intending to contract marriage with a resident of Shanghai. Shipping companies, including railway companies, were responsible to check the availability of fund according to certificates issued by CFA, and all eligible Jews must apply to Shanghai

Municipal Council via CFA. It was a new hope of fleeing to Shanghai. However, this policy was only applicable in the International Settlement under Shanghai Municipal Council, but not valid in Hongkou which was controlled by the Japanese or the French Concession. The Japanese authorities left out the provision about cash availability, and declared they would scrutinize every item in every refugee's application for entry permit. According to the CFA, only a couple of refugees were allowed to enter Hongkou or the French Concession. A letter from a Japanese diplomat in China in January 1940 shows that the Japanese authorities were unhappy with Shanghai Municipal Council for easing the ban on refugees and issuing so many entry permits to Jews from Europe. After all, the Japanese authorities had just issued 25 permits.

Nevertheless, the number of Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai during this period dropped dramatically, even those many still managed to enter Shanghai against the restrictions. Only 2000 had landed in Shanghai from August 1939 to June 1940 before Italy declared war on France and the UK. On August 28, 1939, about 619 refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard Giulio Cesare. They were the last batch of Jewish refugees who departed from Italy before the ban took effect on August 14. After the outbreak of World War II on September 1, the Jewish refugees still on the sea were embarrassed. It was reported that these German Jews would land in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), but it was unknown whether they would stay in Dutch East Indies or travel to Shanghai onboard ships belonging to neutral countries. Meanwhile, hundreds of German Jews were deported from Hong Kong and Singapore since the UK declared war on Germany. But ironically, these Jews had already been deprived of their German citizenship by Hitler's decree.

Since then, only a couple of ships carried Jewish refugees to Shanghai from now and then. On January 22, 1940, 70 refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard Conte Biancamano of Lloyd Triestino. Unlike those who had arrived before them and already settled in Shanghai, these new refugees were rich, since they had met Shanghai Municipal Council's recent requirements. Most of them resided in the International Settlement, while some others settled in Hongkou with a special permit from the Japanese authorities. Most of them had stayed in Italy for some time after leaving Germany and had received overseas funds to cover travel expenses and meet the cash requirement. On February 9, 162 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard SS Conte Rosso of Lloyd Triestino. On March 5, some German Jews who had been allowed by the Nazi government to go to the Far East across Siberia arrived in Shanghai onboard the Japanese liner Hakusaku Maru from Dalian. On April 4, about 100 Jewish refugees, mainly from Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, arrived in Shanghai onboard the Lloyd Triestino liner Ford, and were settled in Shanghai with proof of monetary possession. On May 9, 211 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard SS Conte Rosso of Lloyd Triestino, mainly from Berlin, Breslau (ceded to Poland after WWII and renamed Wroclaw), Danzig and Czechoslovakia, and most of them had come to reunite with their families.

On June 6, 263 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard the liner Ford, of whom most were from Germany, a few were from Austria, and about 50 were from Czechoslovakia. It's believed that they might be the last batch of Jewish refugees who had come to Shanghai by sea. Some Jews who had scheduled to board the liner

Ford to depart on May 6 had been sent back to Munich from the German-Italian border because the Italian government was afraid that the upcoming war between Italy and Britain would threaten the liner's safety. On June 10, Italy declared war on the UK and France, and soon France surrendered. Later, the UK fought with Germany and Italy over the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean, and the fire spread to the Balkans, North Africa and West Asia. Therefore, the traditional sea routes to Shanghai were all cut off. Meanwhile, West European countries including France, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg and the Balkans including Yugoslavia and Greece were taken by the Nazis one after another. The Baltic States, threatened by the Nazis, were later incorporated into the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the Nazis extended their anti-Semitic program to Poland and other Eastern European countries. European Jews were driven to despair. They tried to flee, but fewer were able to get away. During this period, many Jews still picked Shanghai as their destination, but they had to travel by land across Siberia and then northeastern China, Korea or Japan. Since June 1940, about 2000 refugees arrived in Shanghai by land.

After Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, the land routes to Shanghai were also cut off, so no more Jewish refugees were able to get away from Europe. At that time, about 2000 Jewish refugees, mostly from Poland and Lithuania, had already reached the Russian Far East, northeastern China, and Japan, but could not go anywhere due to the intensified war and restrictions on immigration. They finally managed to come to Shanghai.

The experience of more than 1100 Polish Jews on their way to Shanghai is especially noteworthy, including 400 teachers and students of the Mir Yeshiva and the Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva. In 1939 when Germany invaded Poland, they fled to Lithuania, and then thought of obtaining transit visas for Japan with their bogus visas for the Dutch Curacao, and then obtaining in Japan visas for the USA. Thanks to the support of Sugihara Chiune, the Japanese Consul General in Lithuania, they finally got the transit visas. Later, they got exit permission from the Soviet Union government (Lithuania was part of the Soviet Union at that time), and took the train across Siberia to Vladivostok where they left for Kobe via a Soviet Union travel agency which charged 200 USD per person. After staying in Kobe for more than six months, they failed to obtain the visas for the USA, but got the permission to travel to Shanghai with the help of Zorach Warhaftig, representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

According to a newspaper article, "On August 22, 1941, still 296 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai onboard a Japanese ship Asama Maru from Kobe and Yokohama, including 255 Polish and 16 Germans. They left the war-stricken Europe one year ago and had lived in Japan for 10 months although their Japanese visas were valid for only two weeks. The newcomers, most of whom were rabbis, were sent to the Beth Aharon Synagogue." They are the last batch of Jewish refugees coming to Shanghai before Pearl Harbor attack on December 7. After the outbreak of the Pacific War on December 8, 1941, no more Jewish refugees had come to Shanghai because Shanghai's connection with the outside world was totally cut off.

## Conclusion

According to CFA's 1940 annual report published on February 21, 1941, Shanghai was sheltering 23,310 Jewish refugees in 1940 who had been registered with CFA. Afterwards, some more Jewish refugees had come to Shanghai via Siberia, Korea and Japan, while some Jewish refugees traveled to other countries from Shanghai. For example, in 1940, 102 German Jews went to France via Saigon and joined the French Foreign Legion to combat the Nazis; in the second half year of 1941, 29 Polish Jews went to Palestine to join the Zionist movement.

To sum up, at least 25,000 Jewish refugees had lived in Shanghai during World War II, which matches with the data of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. Including the Jewish refugees who had gone on to other countries via Shanghai between 1933 and 1941, the total number would be somewhere around 30,000.

Therefore, it's not at all exaggerating to assert that Shanghai had the largest number of Jewish refugees before and during the World War II among all international cities.

# Chapter 3

## The Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai



After their arrival, the European Jewish refugees had established close contact with the local Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews. However, they had different religious activities and living customs, so there were clashes. Over time, the European Jewish refugees gradually formed their own communities, and also established their own organizations. As the number of European Jewish refugees in other cities in China was small, this chapter focuses on the European Jewish refugee community in Shanghai with more than 20,000 members. It should be noted that, as Jewish refugees could move around in China, the Shanghai Jewish refugee community and their organizations had influenced Jewish refugees in other Chinese cities.

### 3.1 Communal Association of Central European Jews

Soon after their arrival, the European Jewish refugees in Shanghai didn't have their own communal organizations. At first, they attended religious rituals at the Beth Aharon Synagogue, the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, and the Ohel Moishe Synagogue of the Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews. As their population increased, the Central European Jewish refugees requested permission to organize their own religious activities in these synagogues by the German Jewish customs. Despite the consent of the Sephardi Jewish community and the Russian Jewish community, Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi asked them to carry out the rituals by the orthodox traditions of Judaism, which was a big inconvenience for the Central European Jewish refugees who were forced to set up their own communal organizations.

In March 1939, under the auspice of Leopold Steinhardt, Gerhard Gottschalk and Bernard Rosenberg, the Central European Jewish refugees held the first independent religious ritual at the Broadway Theater (later becoming Dongshan Cinema) to celebrate the “Pentecostal”. This is the first step for the Central European Jewish refugees to establish their own independent community organizations. Considering their relationship with CFA, religious organization established after the Pentecostal had remained under CFA, and was coordinated by Dr. Kurt Marx.

In July 1939, led by Dr. Georg Grice, the Jewish refugees from Central Europe established Juedische Kulturgemeinde (the Jewish Cultural Association, or JCA), which was an important step towards the establishment of an independent Central European Jewish community. Organized by JCA, the refugees celebrated the Jewish New Year for the first time. This event further strengthened the consciousness of religious independence of the Central European Jews who then pronounced a stronger call for the establishment of their own Jewish community. In November 1939, the Central European Jewish refugees established an independent communal organization Juedische Gemeinde (the Communal Association of Central European Jews, or CACEJ), regardless of the opposition of Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi and CFA. CACEJ was located on East Seward Road (now Changzhi Road), and Leopold Steinhardt served as its chairman. While CACEJ lacked financial resources, and couldn't get help from CFA, Europe to Shanghai Jewish refugees Committee" support, the robust spirit and solidarity still enabled the Central European Jewish refugees in Shanghai to carry out quite a lot of religious and other communal activities.

CACEJ then set up a Common Weal Department, a Religious Affairs Department and a Legal Affairs Department, as well as an arbitration tribunal, a Women's Union and a Funeral Society to handle such matters as legal proceedings, religious activities, education, hygiene and funeral affairs. CACEJ also published a Jewish Newsletter to report activities of the association and the community. The first rabbi was Dr. J. Winter. In October 1939, after he went the United States, Dr. Joseph Zeitin succeeded him. Other rabbis for refugee services were Carl H. Sauber (both he and Dr. Joseph Zeitin were moderate orthodox), Willie Tessena and George Kantorowsky (both Liberals), and the reformist Dr. E. Silberstein. In spite of this difference, two years before the outbreak of the Pacific War, CACEJ had still developed remarkably with the efforts of its members.

Although the religious rituals at the Broadway Theater were led by their own rabbi and proceeded by the German customs, still a number of liberal refugees thought they were too orthodox. Thus, following Hugo Alexander, some liberal refugees held a standard reformist ritual to celebrate the Passover in 1940 at the East China Sea Theater (now Donghai Cinema). The liberal refugees later set up the Liberal Jewish Association (Juedisch-liberale Gemeinde), headed by Hugo Alexander, and hired Dr. Silberstein as their Rabbi. Meanwhile, CACEJ also provided a special site for the liberal refugees to conduct religious activities to prevent further division.

On June 29, 1941, CACEJ held its first election, with more than 1000 people attending the vote. The election resulted in 21 delegates, who elected a seven-member council. Dr. Fritz Lesser and Dr. Felix Kardegg were made Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor respectively, and Dr. Kurt Redlich was elected Chairman of the Council. R. D. Abraham was invited to be the honorary president. The CACEJ council is fairly representative, including businessmen, clerks, intellectuals, political activists and religious leaders. CACEJ intended to be a Jewish community and a representative body following the European democratic tradition.

After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the Japanese authorities reorganized the CACEJ with a view to strengthening direct control over the European Jewish refugees, bypassing so many assistance organizations for the Jews. The reor-

ganized CACEJ gradually evolved into a political entity representing all refugees, and with its power extended to almost all refugee affairs, became a representative body for Jewish refugees in their relationships with the Japanese authorities. After the Second World War ended, CACEJ was also responsible for the repatriation of European Jewish refugees.

### 3.2 European Jewish Refugees' Arbitration Tribunal

Among so many communal organizations, the most noteworthy is the Arbitration Tribunal. Normally, any legal issue that involved foreigners residing in China should be handled by the Chinese government. No country or its citizens could set up an independent tribunal in China, even "public fairs" in the International Settlement were also tried and handled by a Chinese agency. Therefore, the establishment of the Jewish arbitration tribunal was a rare case in Shanghai and even in the Chinese history. There are two main reasons: First, Shanghai was ruled by the Japanese military authorities. In order to save the trouble, they let the Jews deal with their own legal proceedings and resolve disputes among the Jewish refugees autonomously. They were occupiers, and didn't care about such infringement upon China's sovereignty. Second, it was the Jewish diasporic tradition to establish a religious arbitral tribunal within their community. In the Hellenistic age, Jewish communities had their own judicial authorities in Alexandria. The Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews, before the Central European Jewish community, had already had their arbitral tribunals which were not very well known to outsiders. D. E. J. Abraham was a Sephardi judge for civil security affairs. In December 1939, the Russian Jewish community, in a report to the Congress of the Jewish Community in the Far East, made clear that they would establish a communal arbitration tribunal a few months later. After the massive influx of European Jewish refugees into Shanghai, CFA and IC also put up judicial bodies to handle the administration of justice. CFA set up an Arbitration Court for European Expatriates in the summer of 1939, while IC established a tribunal soon afterwards mainly to solve disputes among non-Jewish refugees.

The Central European Jewish Refugees' Arbitration Tribunal was officially open on February 18, 1940, located No. 222, Lane 416, Tangshan Road. It was composed of the magistrate, lawyers, assistant lawyers and judges, who made an Arbitration Committee. The Committee formulated the statutes of the arbitral tribunal, declaring that: (1) the main task of the Tribunal was to mediate rather than impose punishment; (2) the Tribunal adopted a four-level four-trial system. The first, second and third trials should be conciliative, while the fourth trial should be final and the judgement should be made by a panel consisting of five members, once chaired by Dr. Alfred Raskovitz, a former judge of the German Court of First Instance. In addition, the Central European Jews also set up a lawyers' association, serving nearly a hundred lawyers who provided legal services for the Jewish refugees. This Jewish tribunal had handled thousands of lawsuits within 7 years, before it was banned in 1947. The Chinese Government prohibition order said: "The arbitration tribunal by the

Jewish diaspora in Shanghai violated China's sovereignty right, so it must be closed. Subsequent civil and criminal litigations involving the Jewish expatriates should be submitted to the Chinese judicial authority."

### 3.3 Other Affiliated Organizations of CACEJ

CACEJ had also established a funeral society (Hevrah Kadesha) and a Women's Union. In 1937, after a large number of Central European Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai, Friedrich Gluckstern of CACEJ established his own burial society in August 1940, and built the first cemetery for the Central European Jewish refugees on the Colombia Road (now Fanyu Road) in September. With the increase of refugee deaths, the society built a second cemetery on Zhoujiazui Road. The funeral society was a great help and very popular with the refugees, having up to 1800 members.

The Women's Union was founded in 1940, led by Gertrude Wolfe, with up to 1000 members. The Union is mainly responsible for taking care of the elderly and the sick among the refugees, and also cooking special Sabbath and festive foods. Before the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Union was mainly funded by Mrs. Ruben D. Abraham.

In addition, the Central European Jewish refugees set up a mutual aid organization, the "Kitchen Foundation Committee", in August 1942, which was later referred to as the "Kitchen Foundation". The Foundation was made up of affluent Jewish refugees and aimed to raise funds and take "guardianship duties" to help the poorest Jewish refugees. The Jewish refugees also established the Jewish Singers' Association, and the Zionist refugees also established organizations such as the Theodore Hertz Zionists' Association (see Annex 2 to this chapter).

### 3.4 The Left Wing of the European Jewish Refugees

There are many left-wingers among the Jewish refugees, including members of left-wing political parties such as the German Communist Party, some of whom formed a group in Shanghai. Gunter Nobel, the group leader, joined the German Communist Party in 1933. After the Nazis came to power, a large number of German Communists were put into prison and concentration camps. He was also arrested in 1937. Since then, he and his wife Kinia Nobel had gone through innumerable hardships, and finally fled from Germany to Shanghai. Before and after them, many German Communists and leftists had also fled the Nazis to Shanghai, and there were hundreds of such people he knew.

After they gradually adapted to the environment in Shanghai, some of the German Communist Party members and leftists who knew each other better began to meet regularly, to read writings of Marx and Lenin and exchange of information. They gradually formed an anti-Nazi underground group. The group had about 20–30 Jew-

ish refugee members. Although the group claimed a strong anti-Nazi position, but they failed to connect with the anti-Nazi organizations back in Germany or establish any direct contact with the Chinese Communist Party. It was difficult for them to carry out resistance activities against the German and Japanese fascist, so they mainly organize learning and information exchange sessions.

However, some members of the group had their own connections with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party. Hans Shippe, a founder of the group, was a famous journalist and a member of the Communist Party of Germany, and later directly participated in the war against Japanese aggression led by the Communist Party of China. He died in an anti-Japanese battle in Shandong in November 1941. The Chinese people put up a monument in honor of him. Another leader of the group Walter Czollek also fostered connection with the Communist Party of China through Jacob Rosenfeld, an Austrian doctor who participated in the Chinese revolution. Five key members of the group, including Hans Konig and Kinia Nobel, associated with the Soviet Union. They later worked for the Soviet TASS News Agency, actively reporting to the outside world the Chinese people's anti-Japanese struggles.

Up to June 1941, the task of the group was limited to team development and education of its members, but they were fully prepared to conduct effective work in Europe if they could return one day. Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, however, changed the political situation in Shanghai, which forced the left-wing Jewish refugees in Shanghai to express their views on the war through open discussion and writing. They shared the firm belief that the Nazi's victor at that moment was only a prelude to their final fall. The Soviet TASS News Agency set up its own radio station in Shanghai. From late summer 1941, TASS began to broadcast in four languages (Russian, English, Chinese, German) the daily progress on the frontline, the speeches of anti-Hitler Alliance leaders, opinions on the military and political situation, and comments on the war process. The German Jewish communists actively participated in the German-language broadcasting. Hans Konig wrote quite a few comments on the political and military events for TASS. Many of them, including Gunter Nobel, even asked the Soviet Union Consulate in Shanghai for permission to join the Soviet Red Army, but their requests were rejected due to the sensitivity of their Jews identity and the complicated environment circumstances.

After they were forced to move into the Hongkou Ghetto in 1943, the group continued to meet regularly to exchange the good news of the Allied victory. In May 1945, the news of the surrender of Nazi Germany and the death of Hitler came, and the whole group were extreme rejoiced. On August 6, the news of atomic bombing in Japan reached Shanghai, and a few days later the Japanese surrendered. After September 1945, the terrible insider information of the Holocaust came from Europe, shocking all the group members. Unlike the majority of Jewish refugees in China, these former German Communists and leftists were eager to return to Germany. Their ideal was to build a free, equal, socialist new German, and this ideal had never changed while they took refuge in China. Led by the key members, the group of nearly 300 former German Communists and leftists had repeated consultations and finally decided to return to Germany.

In August 1947, they bade farewell to Shanghai and the Chinese people, and embarked on a home-coming journey on August 21, 1947. Altogether 295 former German Communists and leftists and their families arrived in Berlin. They were a very small minority of the Jews taking refuge in China who had returned to Germany. At the Berlin train station, they received a very warm welcome. In 1988, Comrade Deng Xiaoping invited the former German Communists who had participated in the Chinese revolution to visit China, and Hunter Nobel and his wife were among the final visitors.

### **3.5 Jewish Refugees from Poland and Czechoslovakia**

Polish Jewish refugees were a relatively independent group. In October 1941, in his letter to Michel Speelman, head of CFA, A. Oppenheim of the Committee for Assistance of Eastern European Jews (EJC) pointed out that “the Poles and Lithuanians were totally different from other refugees in religious habit, character and language. I do not mean that they are better or inferior to others, but they are different and must therefore form a separate group.” That is true. Although the Polish Jewish refugees did not establish their own community organizations, but they were always a separate group, speaking Polish when they got together, and there was always a line, however invisible, separating them from the German Jews and Russian Jews. When the Japanese authorities declared the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees and forced the European Jewish refugees to move into this area which was called the Hongkou Ghetto, only the Polish Jewish refugees resisted on the ground that, unlike the Austrian Jews, they were not “stateless refugees”, because the Polish Government in exile was still active. Later, they had to move into the Ghetto in the end, but their resistance shows the uniqueness of the Polish Jews. The Polish Jewish refugees were also independent in the conduct of religious activities. They were the true Orthodox, showing strong Hasidic characteristics. Meanwhile, more than 400 students and rabbis of the Mir Yeshiva and other religious institutes remained in the Beth Aharon Synagogue, and as a result, the Mir Yeshiva was not destroyed by the Nazis like any other religious institutes. It had grown in Shanghai, and laid down the foundation for its rebuilding in Jerusalem and Brooklyn after the war. Nowadays, people still often mention the historic role Shanghai played in conserving the tradition of orthodox Judaism.

Jewish refugees from Czechoslovakia also formed a small group in the Jewish community in Shanghai. Most of them were members of the “Czechoslovak Club”, and loyal to the Czechoslovak government in exile. They often gathered together. Interestingly, most of them kept their Czechoslovak passport, and showed the Czechoslovakia passport when they passed the British jurisdiction on their way to Shanghai. This saved them the trouble of misunderstanding which would otherwise be caused if they showed German passports. People disagree about the number of Jewish refugees in Czechoslovakia. A former Czechoslovakian Jewish refugee wrote in his memoir: “There are about 40 people from Czechoslovakia.” But in recent years,

systematic researches have produced a larger number: about 100. The latter number must be more reliable as it is based on research.

Among the Central European Jewish refugees, there are some people who had Jewish descent and partial Jewish descent but had converted to Christianity. Nevertheless, they had also received assistance from organizations such as CFA. At the same time, these Christian Jewish refugees had also played a role in the relief movement. They raised some of funding for the Jewish refugees in Shanghai through their connections with Christian relief organizations in the United States. In order to safeguard their own interests, they also established several independent groups, such as Shanghai Hebrew Evangelists, Quakers, the Catholic Refugee Council, and the Central European Protestant Federation.

## **Annex 1: Aspects of the Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai**

**William Schurtman**

### ***One***

By far and away the greatest problem confronting the Jewish refugees was the question of bare survival. They had escaped the concentration camps and gas chambers of the Nazis, but they were now faced with the problem of making a living in a completely foreign environment.

Many of the refugees who landed in Shanghai were virtually penniless. They had no relatives or friends awaiting them; they did not speak the language; they knew nothing of the city or its inhabitants. In fact, many of them had decided to go to Shanghai on the spur of the moment. If it had not been for the aid that was probably forthcoming, I have little doubt that hundreds—and perhaps even thousands—of refugees would have perished.

Shanghai had no organized social agencies in the Western sense. Destitute Chinese begged on the street, and in the winter quietly froze to death or died of malnutrition. The White Russian and Portuguese communities had small relief organizations to help their own indigent, and there were no other Europeans in need prior to the coming of the refugees.

When the first wave of Jewish refugees came, the local Jews quickly organized a committee to help them, but their relatively limited resources soon ran out, so regular Jewish relief agencies like the International Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the H.I.A.S. took over many of its functions.

## Location and Housing

At first, an attempt was made to find individual rooms and apartments for the refugees In various parts of the city, but as every Incoming Lloyd Triestino liner discharged additional hundreds of helpless immigrants, the situation became acute.

Those refugees who could afford it sought homes for themselves. The wealthier ones secured rooms or apartments in the International Settlement and the French Concession; the poorer ones were obliged to settle across the river in a Japanese sector of the city known as Hongkew, where the rents were much lower. In 1937 Hongkew had been one of the focal points In the Sino-Japanese Battle of Shanghai, and the area had been devastated by Japanese bombers. When we arrived in Shanghai towards the end of 1938, many sections of Hongkew, which had once been a populous borough of the city, were in ruins and were almost completely deserted.

But before long new buildings were being put up to house the incoming masses of refugees. I believe the reader may be able to gain a better picture of housing conditions if I describe our own home, which was certainly one of the "better" types. When we first arrived In Shanghai, our total family wealth consisted of approximately ten dollars. However, both of my parents were fortunate enough to secure work, and for the first few years we lived in relative luxury. We had an apartment in the International Settlement, and we were even able to afford summer vacations in North China resorts like Tsingtao. After Pearl Harbor, however, conditions changed drastically. The Japanese Occupation Forces issued a decree compelling all anti-Hitler Jewish refugees to move into a restricted ghetto-like area in the heart of Hongkew. We were forced to abandon our apartment, and after paying a fantastic amount of "key-money (a flat sum given to the landlord illegally, in addition to the regular rent) we were finally able to secure a single, small room in what dad formerly been a Chinese school. We were to live in this small (91' × 12') dark and badly-ventilated room till a few weeks before the end of the war, when our house was destroyed by American bombers; after that, we had to move into an even smaller room. It goes without saying, of course, that our room did not have any private bath or kitchen, or even running water. The entire building had a common toilet. This toilet did not have any running water either, and every morning a "coolie" would show up with what was euphemistically known as a "honey cart", and carry away the waste to be sold as manure. The building also had a common shower, but this could only be used at certain times, and most people preferred to wash themselves in little basins in their own rooms. My mother had to do all her cooking on a little charcoal stove, no larger than a flowerpot, which could be kept going only by constant and assiduous fanning. Since it would have taken too long to boil water on one of these ridiculous little contraptions, it was my daily mission to run down to the "hot water man", whose water-boiling establishment can be found at any Shanghai street corner (at least in the poorer neighborhoods), and buy a kettle of hot water.

In the summer we were plagued with extremely hot and humid weather, which brought no relief at night. The New York summers are faintly reminiscent of this weather, but they are not nearly as bad. Naturally, we had no air-conditioning or even electric fans, and people went around with a minimum of clothing, which was

quickly soaked through by perspiration and had to be changed several times a day. The winters, on the other hand, were bitterly cold and chilblains and frostbite were a common complaint. In order to heat our little room, we had a small pot-bellied stove, which also served as an auxiliary cooking range; but fuel was expensive, and we could only use it for limited periods of time. Fortunately, our building had electricity, which could be used only for lighting purposes, but during the war there were constant power failures and, in addition, the Japanese often sought to enforce air-raid blackouts by simply shutting off the city's power.

As can be imagined, food was very scarce and expensive, especially during the war years. I don't believe anyone actually starved to death among the refugees, but there were numerous cases of extreme malnutrition. Buying new clothing was virtually out of the question, of course, and most people had to make shift with the clothes they had brought over from Europe. As a result, most of the refugees soon took on a very ragged appearance, and it was not uncommon for some of the poorer ones to run around in the winter with rags tied around their feet and newspaper stuck down their shirts.

So far, I have described the living conditions of the more well-to-do immigrants, who could at least make some effort to take care of themselves. But, in addition, there were thousands of refugees who were completely helpless and destitute. To aid these unfortunate individuals, the local committees—supported by grants from Sir Victor Sassoon and other wealthy Western residents, both Jewish and Gentiles—established a number of shelter camps. These camps were improved from hastily converted and reconstructed schools, warehouses, army barracks, and the like. It was thought that these shelters, which were to last for twelve years, would be only temporary, and in any event there was not enough time or money to transform them into anything resembling a decent human habitation. Scores of families were crowded into small, ill-ventilated dormitories. There was no privacy whatsoever, with men, women and children being forced into the same room. Each family would stake out a few square feet for itself and its belongings, and of course there were constant boundary disputes, with neighbors arguing over an inch of floor space with as much heat as American homeowners disputing the location of a backyard fence. Sanitary conditions were deplorable, of course, and it is probably a tribute to the refugee doctors that there were no great camp epidemics, despite the fact that the Chinese population of Shanghai suffered from year-round cholera, typhoid, typhus, smallpox, and dysentery epidemics.

Once the question of providing shelter for these refugees had been solved, the next big problem was that of feeding them. The Committee, whose functions were subsequently taken over by the J. D. C. set up make-shift kitchens—which were also to last for the next twelve years—where over 8000 people could obtain a scanty, but nonetheless indispensable, daily meal. Particular efforts were made, of course, to provide the younger children with such necessities as milk, and there were numerous instances of parents going virtually without food in order to provide more for their children.

## Occupations

Although thousands of refugees lived in the shelter camps, an even greater number were determined to make a living of their own, and many succeeded, although most of them required at least part-time relief in the way of free bread (whose price was truly exorbitant) and other small benefits. When the refugees came to Shanghai, there were virtually no jobs open in any of the city's offices, and of course they were in no position to compete with Chinese coolie labor.

Many of the immigrants became door-to-door salesmen, and the sight of scores of these so-called "Hausierer", scurrying across the Garden Bridge, which connected Hongkew and the rest of the city, every morning soon became a familiar part of the Shanghai scene. At first, they were quite successful, because this type of salesmanship was something completely new in Shanghai, and they managed to peddle everything from toothbrushes to shoelaces to the wealthy foreigners and Chinese. But as their number increased, and as their clients began to develop sales resistance, business fell off, and only a very few managed to earn adequate living that way.

The vast majority of refugees remained in Hongkew where they succeeded in establishing a flourishing domestic economy. They reconstructed dozens of shattered streets, using the very rubble to erect the new buildings and shops, and Hongkew soon began to take on the appearance of a small German or Austrian city—if we allow for such incongruous additions as Chinese "hot-water-Man", rickshaws, coolies, etc. Hundreds of business establishments were opened, catering mostly to refugee customers. There were groceries, pharmacies, bakeries, plumbers, locksmiths, barbers, tailors, cobblers, milliners and, of course, there were the inevitable Viennese "coffee-houses", without which the average native of Vienna would find it difficult to exist. A few enterprising souls even established small factories, turning out such products as soap, candles, knitted goods, leatherware, and especially European-type food products—sausages, confections, soft drinks, etc. Many of these products also found a ready market among the Chinese, since they had previously been unknown or had been imported from abroad.

Former professionals had a much more difficult time, of course. Doctors and dentists soon set up little offices and did a fairly good business, although there was a proportionately great number of them, since many of Germany's and Austria's physicians had been Jews. Engineers and architects encountered greater difficulties in finding work, although they aided in the reconstruction of Hongkew. Lawyers, economists, college professors, and the like, found no outlets for their abilities, of course. Some of them became peddlers; others sold newspapers; many were compelled to live in the shelter camps, where they engaged in local politics and helped in directing the affairs of the community.

By the end of 1941, the Jewish refugees had succeeded in establishing a surprisingly successful community, and it has been estimated that if there had been no Pacific War, at least one-third could have settled in Shanghai permanently. After Pearl Harbor, however, conditions deteriorated rapidly, and the economic situation of the refugees became desperate again. The Japanese took over the entire city, and after spending a year learning how to run a complex metropolis of this size, they interned

all Allied nationals, including Americans, British and Dutch residents. They were not quite certain how to treat the Jewish refugees. On the one hand, these Jews were obviously anti-Axis and were at least emotional supporters of the Allies; but, on the other hand, they were not Allied nationals and could not be placed in internment camps. After the war, it was discovered that the local Nazis had offered some helpful suggestions on how to dispose of the refugee problem, including such thoroughgoing and well-tested methods as gas chambers and incinerators. Fortunately, the Japanese were a little more civilized and humane than their European allies, and refused to adopt such drastic measures. In the end, they decided to herd all Jewish refugees who had entered Shanghai after 1937 into the small Hongkew Ghetto, which I have already described above. The area was surrounded by barbed wire and sentries and all Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto under penalty of imprisonment or even death. As a result, the refugees were placed in the rather anomalous position of living in a quasi-internment camp, but at the same time having to provide for their own living.

A few hundred refugees, who had jobs or business establishments in the city, were permitted to leave the ghetto during the day. They had to carry special identification buttons and passes, which were renewable every few weeks. The person in charge of issuing these passes, which represented the livelihood of many families, was a sadistic and unpredictable little Japanese official by the name of Ghoya. Mr. Ghoya, who liked to call himself the “King of the Jews”, was easily the most feared individual in Hongkew. He was responsible for the death and severe beatings and punishment of a number of refugees, to say nothing of the indescribable mental anguish and humiliation which he caused to those unfortunates who had to depend on his good will for the renewal of their passes.

The Sephardi Jews were of course interned as British citizens, but the ‘White Russian Jews managed to lead a relatively unmolested existence and were not compelled to live in the ghetto. There have been stories that they had to pay huge sums of money to the Japanese for the privilege of being left alone, but regardless of how they did it, it was fortunate for the refugees that they managed to stay out. When the war broke out, remittances from the United States were cut off, of course, and the situation of the thousands of destitute refugees living in the shelter camps looked very precarious. The local representatives of the JDC were given authority, however, to raise loans among the Russian Jews and other non-interned foreigners, and these loans—which were promptly repaid after the war with a large amount of interest—helped to sustain thousands of Immigrants, who would otherwise have starved to death.

## **Two**

### **Government and Political Organization**

Shanghai was never a city with very clear-cut political lines. In 1933, for instance, there were so many different governments, each with its own officialdom, bureau-

crary, police force, etc., that it was difficult to tell where the jurisdiction of one began and the other left off. There was the French Concession government, the Municipal Council in the International Settlement, the Chinese puppet regime of Wang Jing-wei, and overshadowing everything were the Japanese Occupation forces, which also had their own internal troubles, as the Army, Navy, Gendarmerie and Civilian Administration vied for greater Jurisdiction.

In the midst of all this confusion, it was only natural for the Jewish refugees to adopt a certain amount of self-government. The various relief committees formed the nuclei of all political organization, of course, and they were often treated as the official representatives of the community by the Japanese authorities. Each shelter camp had its own elected officials, and in addition to an administrative staff which supervised all camp activities, the camps also had their own quasi-official police force known as the "Heim Polizel", whose function it was to maintain order and discipline. The refugees living outside the camps often formed small political units of their own. For instance, the Inhabitants of the old school in which we spent the war years, elected committees to run the building, and other neighborhood groups did the same thing. The various governmental groups often had arbitration courts, which tried to settle internal disputes in an amicable fashion, without recourse to the Japanese authorities.

In general, however, there was no single overall community government, and there were certainly no community-wide elections. The Japanese were content to let the refugees run their own affairs, so long as these did not interfere with any Japanese plans. What they did was to select certain prominent community leaders and hold them responsible for the actions of the entire group. These leaders had to help the Japanese organize special refugee patrols, who had to do sentry duty at the boundaries of the ghetto and make certain that none of their compatriots left the ghetto without having the required pass. In addition, they established refugee air-raid wardens and stretcher bearers, who proved themselves very useful when the ghetto was bombed in July 1945.

In a way, the Japanese actually came to regard the Jewish ghetto as a distinct asset. It did not cost them anything, because they were not compelled to house or feed the refugees. At the same time, they found all sorts of uses for the area. They surmised correctly that the Americans would hesitate to bomb the Jewish ghetto, whose location was well-known to them, of course. Consequently, they used the ghetto as a repository for munition dumps, oil depots, radio stations, army barracks and the like. Apparently, they might have overdone it, because shortly before the end of the war, the Americans who had hitherto scrupulously avoided Hongkew finally conducted a number of air-raids during which many houses (including our own) were demolished, and several refugees (in addition to hundreds of Chinese), lost their lives.

### ***Three***

As indicated previously, most of the refugees came from middle and lower-class backgrounds and despite the enforced closeness and intermingling, many of them managed to retain the old social stratifications. It was pathetic to see how many former professional people insisted on retaining their old titles. Ragged newspaper vendors were respectfully addressed as Herr Dektor; one shabbily-dressed old man insisted on being called Herr Oberlandesgerichtsrat.

There was a considerable amount of internal friction, of course, but on the whole the community showed a surprising amount of solidarity. Austrians and Germans often regarded each other resentfully, but usually combined to vilify the Polish Jews, whom they despised. There were the usual personal quarrels and fights, which can be found in even the best-run community, but as I have already pointed out, these were generally settled by refugee arbitration courts without recourse to the Japanese or Chinese authorities. The amazing thing, in my opinion, is that the people actually bore up so well. Far from their homelands, constantly fighting for bare survival, harassed by Japanese and Chinese, and finally by American bombers, they nevertheless maintained a remarkable degree of stability and equilibrium.

As I have stressed repeatedly throughout this paper, most of them regarded their stay In Shanghai as an unpleasant, but at any rate temporary, interlude, and they lived only for the day when they could wander on to America and Australia or return to Europe. They followed the war with intense interest, and despite the fact that most of the war news consisted of Japanese propaganda, they could tell almost instinctively when the Allies had won another great victory.

Although the community did not have any magazines or journals, it did have a daily newspaper—the “Shanghai Jewish Chronicle”, which carried local news and whatever foreign news the Japanese authorities would permit it to print. In addition, a few refugees owned radios; they had to listen mostly to Japanese-controlled English-language stations, but they did obtain some encouraging news from a Soviet radio station in Shanghai, whose operation the Japanese were compelled to permit, since Russia and Japan were not at war with each other. Short-wave sets were strictly forbidden, of course, but a few daring individuals had them anyway, and spread the group via the community grapevine. One of the most prevalent commodities was undoubtedly the “rumor”; people seemed to delight in passing on, and even embellishing, the most nonsensical tales, and Chusan Road in Hongkew’s business center became known as “Rumor Alley.” One of the most prevalent rumors was, of course, that the war had ended, and one day the rumor was finally true—the war had ended. But the rumors did not stop with the end of the war, and when we left Shanghai in July 1947, rumor-manufacturing was still one of the community’s chief industries.

## ***Four***

### **Religion**

The vast majority of the refugees were Jewish, of course, but there were a few anti-Hitler Christians among them. Some of the Jewish men had Gentile wives and children, and in addition, a minute number were converted to Catholicism and Protestantism and received a few extra benefits from the missionaries.

It is interesting to note that the German and Austrian Jews did not build themselves a synagogue, but of course it is difficult to say whether this was due to lack of religious seal, or poverty, or both. The more orthodox Jews made use of a small White Russian temple in the neighborhood; the Reformist Congregations met in such places as school auditoriums, meetings halls, etc. On the whole, religion did not seem to play an outstanding role in the community.

One exception that must be noted were the Polish Jews. Most of these Jews remained completely orthodox and maintained several Yeshivas and Talmud Thoras. One of these seminaries was said to be the oldest Yeshiva In the world. Its 500 rabbinical students and their teachers had come all the way from Poland as a unit, and had reached Shanghai with not a single student, teacher or book lost or even a lesson missed. They set up their school immediately upon arriving in the city, and proceeded with their studies, almost completely oblivious to what went on around them.

## ***Five***

### **Education**

In 1938, Shanghai had a number of British, French and American schools and universities. One of these was the Shanghai Jewish School, which had been established jointly by the Sephardic and Russian communities. The school, which was located in the center of the city, had a British headmaster and a number of British teachers and was run strictly along English lines—even during the war, when the British staff was interned and had to be replaced by an English-speaking White Russian faculty.

The first Hitler refugees to arrive in Shanghai, including my parent; sent their children to the Shanghai Jewish School, but as thousands of immigrants began to pour into Hongkew, it became obvious that they would need a school of their own. With the aid of a wealthy Sephardi Jew by the name of Kadoorie, the Hongkew Community established its own school, and most of the refugee children received their education there. Despite the fact that the instructors were all refugees, classes were conducted in English, which soon became the second mother-tongue of the children. It had very high continental academic standards, which it managed to maintain even during the war, when it operated under Japanese supervision.

In addition to this combined elementary and high school, the refugees also set up a number of small trade and vocational schools. They never established a university, of course, but there is no doubt in my mind that they would have accomplished even this if the community had lasted long enough.

## Six

### Recreation

One of the chief factors which made life bearable for the refugees was the quantity and variety of recreation.

There were three or four Chinese movie theaters in Hongkew, which specialized in American pictures, and these were quickly patronized by refugees—eager not only for entertainment, but also for an opportunity to learn English. During the war, American pictures were forbidden, of course, but old German, French, Italian and Russian movies helped to provide a fairly entertaining film-fare.

Among the refugees, there were many professional, as well as amateur, entertainers and these quickly swung into action. Actors organized drama groups; musicians set up bands and orchestras and several singers even formed a light opera company, which put on some highly successful operettas.

There were, of course, the ubiquitous coffee houses and bridge clubs, and even a few nightclubs, including a very pleasant roof-terrace on one of the neighborhood's tallest buildings, which was a great boon during the hot summers. On the other hand, there were no bars or corner pubs until after the war, when a few were opened to cater to American servicemen.

As could be expected in a closely-knit (and closely-packed) community of this type, there was a good deal of home-entertaining and the art of conversation reached an all-time high. Because of the scarcity of food, the hostess usually agreed to provide hot water, while the guests brought their own coffee (or, more generally, coffee substitute), tea and sugar or saccharin.

Shortly after their arrival, refugees set up soccer teams, and within a few months they had succeeded in establishing a 3-division amateur soccer league which conducted annual tournaments before thousands of enthusiastic spectators and whose teams even competed with Chinese and other foreign squads. Other popular sports included boxing, ping pong, a little tennis and even some baseball.

Although the community did not have any public libraries, several enterprising refugees rounded up small stocks of books and established highly successful circulating libraries. The younger element in the community—and here I speak from personal experience—carried on a booming trade in comic books.

## ***Seven***

### **Relations with Other Groups**

When the refugees first arrived In Shanghai, the wealthy foreign elements, such as the British, Americans, Dutch and French, were not especially overjoyed. In the first place, they regarded the refugees as a definite nuisance, although it must be added that many of them did contribute generously to aid funds. But, what was probably more important, was the fact that the influx of poverty-stricken Europeans served to lower still another notch the esteem in which the white man had once been held by the Chinese. At the beginning of the century, a white man in Shanghai was virtually a demi-god. The White Russian immigration after 1917, as well as numerous other factors, such as the Chinese Revolution and the rising spirit of nationalism, had begun to change the attitude of the Chinese towards foreigners, and the arrival of the ragged refugees merely served to strengthen this growing trend.

The Sephardic and Russian Jews were also not enthusiastic over the coming of the refugees. Of course, they were anxious to aid their persecuted co-religionists, and as I have emphasized throughout this report, they rendered invaluable assistance. But there was never any real “rapprochement” between the established communities and the newcomers, except possibly between the Orthodox Polish Jews and their White Russian counterparts.

Relations with the Chinese were pretty good, on the whole. Of course, there were numerous instances where Chinese tried to humiliate and insult the refugees in public, secure in the knowledge that the immigrants were vastly outnumbered and could not fight back. This type of behavior was particularly prevalent after the war when the city was in the hands of Chiang Kai-shek’s Rationalist Government. But I am convinced that these Chinese were not motivated by any kind of anti-Semitism but were merely availing themselves of the opportunity to “get back” at some whites for the humiliations they themselves once had to suffer under the British and French. In general, however, relations with the Chinese were very friendly. In our early and more prosperous years, my family had retained a Chinese houseboy, an “amah” (nursemaid), and even a part-time rickshaw coolie, but these luxuries ceased as soon as the war began. Most refugees never came into contact with higher-class Chinese, and the exigencies of their existence forced them to treat the lower-class Chinese, who were their neighbors and customers, as equals. But although they lived and worked with them, very few refugees ever became really well-acquainted with them. I would surmise that less than 1% ever learned to speak the language properly, although they did pick up a few necessary words and expressions, and I know of only two persons who learned how to read and write Chinese. Most of the refugees had enough trouble trying to master English, which was the more important language in this bilingual city. In contrast to the refugees, many Chinese learned to speak fluent German. Although history shows that the Chinese always swallow up invaders and immigrants, here is one instance where they adopted infinitely more refugee customs

and traits than vice versa. But, of course, the refugee colony lasted only twelve years, so I don't think I'll make this the basis for a sweeping new historical thesis.

**About the Author** William Schurtman, a former Jewish refugee, became a successful lawyer in the United States after the war, and has been actively engaged in the studies of the Jewish refugee community in Shanghai. This is an excerpt from his Report on the Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai published in January 1954.

## Annex 2: Zionism Among Jewish Refugees in Shanghai

### Yu Weidong

From 1937 to 1945, the Chinese people were engaged in the war against Japanese aggression. In the early stage of this period, Shanghai became the center of the Far East Zionism because of the influx of Jewish refugees from Europe and the sudden expansion of the Zionist population in China and Shanghai. Later, the Facists did not only kill millions of European Jews, but also made a serious threat to the Jewish community, especially the Jewish community in Shanghai. As a more organized group of the Jews, the Zionist groups became the backbone of the Jewish refugees and were actively involved in the anti-fascist struggle. This paper will focus on the study of Jewish refugees in Shanghai engaged in the Zionist movement, not only the Zionist movement of the Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews, but also the Zionist movement in other parts of China, like Harbin, Tianjin and Hong Kong.

### *The Zionist Movement in Shanghai Before the Jewish Refugees Came to Shanghai*

On August 29, 1897, the first World Zionist Congress was held in Basel, Switzerland. Three years later, a fund was established in Shanghai, led by Elly Kadoorie, to support the cause of Zionism. In 1903, the Shanghai Jews established the "Shanghai Zionist Association", with N. E. B. Ezra as its Secretary General. In 1904, the Shanghai Zionist Association published its English monthly Israel's Messenger, founded by Ezra who was also the editor in chief. The congratulatory message declared that Israel's Messenger was Shanghai Zionist Association's official mouthpiece. The newspaper promoted the Zionist movement and mainly covered the activities of the Shanghai Jewish community. It was influential among the Jews in China, in the Far East and even in the whole world.

In 1917, thanks to the efforts of the pro-British faction of the World Zionist Organization, the British government decided to support the Zionist movement for strategic needs. On November 2, 1917, the British Foreign Minister Balfour wrote to Lord Rothschild, the British Jewish businessman and Zionist activist, announcing

that “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”. This Balfour Declaration indicates that the UK, the United States and other major powers formally recognized and supported the Zionist movement. The Declaration had encouraged the Zionist organizations around the world.

Shortly after the publication of the Balfour Declaration, Ezra wrote to the governments of China and Asian countries and many celebrities in the name of Israel’s Messenger, calling on them to support the Zionist movement. His bold action turned out to be an unexpected success. The Chinese deputy foreign minister Chen Lu wrote a letter dated December 4, 1918 to Elly Kadoorie, head of Shanghai Zionist Association, on behalf of the Chinese government, expressing respect for the Balfour Declaration. The letter says, “The Chinese government holds the same position with the United Kingdom concerning the will of your Association to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.”

The biggest victory of Ezra was a letter received from Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, founder of the Republic of China. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen’s letter reads like this:

April 24, 1920

Dear Mr. Ezra,

I’ve read your letter and Israel’s Messenger with great interest. I hope you believe that I am sympathetic with your movement, one of the greatest movements of the world. All democracy lovers will surely help and support the great revival of your great nation which has made a significant contribution to the world civilization and deserves a glorious position in the international community.

Sun Yat-Sen

After the October Revolution of 1917, more Russian Jews came to Shanghai via Vladivostok, Harbin and Tianjin, so the Shanghai Zionist Association experienced a rapid expansion. As a result, Ashkenazi Jews increased significantly in the Shanghai Zionist Association which had been dominated by Sephardi Jews. Russian Zionists were relatively independent in the Shanghai Zionist movement, and later gradually formed the Ashkenazi organization Kadimah. Like Kadima, the Sephardic Zionists also formed a group which was often referred to as Ezra Organization because of Ezra’s reputation. In 1928, Mrs. Raymond Elias Toeg from another distinguished Sephardic family took the place of Elly Kadoorie as chairman of the Shanghai Zionist Association. The following year, Mrs. Toeg and Ezra, at the invitation of the Chinese Government, attended the reburial ceremony of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen in Nanjing, indicating that the Zionist movement in Shanghai and China already had been rather well recognized.

From 1929 to 1937, the Shanghai Zionist movement experienced internal division and reorganization, due to the internal differences and quarrels. The Zionists from Russia were more revisionist because of their particular experience. In 1929, a group called “China Revisionist Zionist Union” was set up in Shanghai, possibly as a Chinese or local Shanghai branch of the global revisionist Zionist movement. In 1931, Betar, the Zionist youth movement, set up a branch in Shanghai, and the Shanghai Zionist movement had gained considerable momentum. Thanks to the active efforts of

Shanghai Betar movement, Shanghai Volunteer Corps formally set up a Jewish unit in 1932, consisting primarily of well-trained Betar members. While revisionist Zionists grew in Shanghai, some other factions of the Zionist movement also appeared in Shanghai, like Mizrachi, a religious Zionist organization, Agudat Israel which shifted from opposing to accepting Zionism, Poalei Zion that had socialist characteristics, and left-wing Zionist Workers Party. Most of them, however, had names only, without organizing any real activities.

### ***Zionist Activities of Jewish Refugees in Shanghai and Their Own Organizations***

After 1933, Jews fleeing Nazi Germany started to arrive in Shanghai. From 1937 to 1941, the influx of Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, Poland and other European countries continued unstoppably, and nearly 30,000 Jewish refugees had landed in Shanghai. Of the refugees arriving in Shanghai, a considerable number were already Zionists or Zionist sympathizers. Many young refugees were members of the Betar or revisionist Zionists. Even those who did not accept Zionism, after experiencing the brutal persecution, exclusion and massacre by the Nazis, had gradually accepted some of the Zionist claims. Thus, many of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai joined the Zionist organizations or participated in various Zionist activities, which gave them a strong spiritual support.

As they were mostly Ashkenazi Jews, the majority of Jewish refugees in Shanghai belonged to the Ashkenazi Zionist groups. The Ashkenazi organization Kadimah had mainly spoken Russian and some English, but after 1937 Kadimah set up a German-speaking branch, as a large number of German and Austrian Jews came. The members were all Zionist Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria, and the leaders were Bernard Rosenberg and Ossie Lewin. At the same time, Betar also set up a German-speaking group, of about 300 members, which was located in the synagogue on Ward Road (now Changyang Road) in Hongkou.

On September 9, 1939, the German-speaking Jewish refugees set up their own independent Zionist organization: AZO “Theodor Herzl”. The founders included Jacob Wachtel and Otto Koritschoner. The organization was headquartered in Hongkou and had a division in the French Concession and the International Settlement respectively, and had attracted more than 2000 members within one year. The number was much larger than the Sephardic Zionist and the Russian Zionist groups.

Between 1940 and 1941, more than 1000 Jewish refugees from Poland arrived in Shanghai, including more than 100 Zionists. It is interesting to note that they represented almost all of the factions of the Zionist movement. Some of the refugees, like Zorach Warhaftig, L. Ilutovich, S. Bergman and Y. Dobekirer, had been leaders and activists of the Zionist movement in Poland and Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, the

other Polish Jewish refugees also generally sympathetic with the Zionist movement, which fueled the Polish Zionist movement in Shanghai to some extent.

### ***Split and Merger of Shanghai Zionist Organizations***

After the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, the dramatic changes in the global situation intensified the long-standing differences within the world Zionist movement. There were two key dividing issues: (1) Should they join the United Kingdom in the fight against fascism? (2) How could they promote the Zionist movement amid the Great World War?

The disagreements also happened to the Zionist movement in Shanghai. For the Shanghai Zionists, the dividing issues were how they should cope with the Japanese authorities and how they could push forward the Zionist movement in the special environment in Shanghai. Due to the disagreements, AZO “Theodor Herzl” split in 1941. While some members backed out, others organized their own groups, like Zion Zioni and the Zionist Association. After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the Japanese army occupied the concessions in Shanghai, and began to treat the expatriates from the UK and the United States as hostile aliens. That seriously affected the Zionist organizations in Shanghai composed of mainly British Jews.

In February 1943, the declaration of the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees in Hongkou (the Hongkou Ghetto) by the Japanese put the German and Austrian Zionists in trouble, but also brought them together. In the Ghetto, AZO “Theodor Herzl”, Zion Zioni and the Zionist Association joined together to become a new organization named Zionist Organization Shanghai, with P. Parnes as its first Chairman. At that time, Japan and the Soviet Union did not fight, so the Russian Zionist organization could still carry out activities in Shanghai without much restriction.

### ***Main Activities of the Shanghai Zionist Movement During the Anti-Japanese War***

From 1937 to 1945, the activities of the Shanghai Zionist movement, including the Zionist organizations of Jewish Refugees, mainly include:

First, aiding the Jewish refugees. As the Zionist groups had strict organization, rather fixed membership and strong leadership, so they were able to play an important role in the organization and coordination of aid for the new Jewish refugees in Shanghai. When the Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai, the Sephardic Zionists immediately called on the entire Jewish community to help their troubled compatriots. As mentioned earlier, the first meeting in Shanghai to discuss the assistance of Jewish refugees was convened in October 1938 by Horace Kadoorie, Elly Kadoorie’s son. The Kadoories also founded a Jewish school in Hongkou for the refugee kids.

Although the Russian Zionists were not as rich as the Sephardi Jews in Shanghai, they had a larger number and were able to conduct a great amount of specific and complex work. For instance, in the establishment of the aforesaid EJC, the Russian Jews in Shanghai played an important role. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, in particular after the declaration of the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees, the Russian Zionists used their legal status to perform jobs beyond the reach of other Zionist organizations. Of course, the German and Austrian Jewish refugees also played a considerable role in promoting refugee solidarity after their Zionist groups were organized.

Second, publishing newspapers and magazines that promoted Zionism and provided spiritual foods for the Shanghai Jewish community (especially the Jewish refugees). After 1937, the number of Jewish expatriates in Shanghai surged, and the spiritual and cultural demand grew strongly. To meet this demand, a number of Jewish newspapers were published, of which the most influential were some Zionist publications. Our Life weekly, founded and edited by D. Rabinovich, was published in three languages: Russian, English and Yiddish. It was very popular among the Shanghai Jews, especially the Russian Jews, after 1941, for its strong Zionist stance. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, edited by O. Levin, was another influential newspaper with the Zionist stance. It was published in German and English and very popular among the German-speaking Jewish refugees. Other influential publications included: Die Gelbe Post, Shanghai Woche (later renamed 8 Uhr Abendblatt), The Shanghai Post, Das Wort and Unser Welt, which were all Zionist to some extent. From July to Oct. 1943, a German-language publication Davar was secretly issued in the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees to promote the Zionist movement and anti-fascist ideas among the Jewish refugees.

Third, organizing and attending political activities in alignment with the international Zionist movement. For instance, in late 1937, a delegation was sent to the Far East Jewish Conference in Harbin. Another example is that the death of Ze'ev Jabotinsky in 1940 gathered a big crowd of Zionist revisionists in Shanghai who mourned his death and publicized his ideas. However, after the Japanese occupied the concessions and the International Settlement, the Zionist organizations in Shanghai were cut off from the external Zionist movement, while the situation forced them to stop political activities. They had to shift their focus to the cultural and sports fields.

Fourth, organizing cultural and sports activities to enhance the cohesion of the Jewish community. As mentioned earlier, Shanghai Betar was committed to organizing sports and military training for the Jewish youth. After the influx of refugees, the number of participants in Beta activities increased sharply. After the outbreak of WWII, these activities got more and more military content. In December 1941, the Japanese took control over the whole city of Shanghai, and after the proclamation of the Hongkou Ghetto in February 1943, the Russian Zionist-based Betar and its German branch managed to continue the activities, but in order to avoid the suspicion and intervention of the Japanese authorities, military training had to be made secret, while in public they still organized sports (football, tennis and swimming) and entertainment (weekend balls, amateur concerts and drams in Yiddish) events.

For some time, Betar also organized job training and tutoring sessions for young adult refugees, as well as teaching them the Jewish culture, religion, Hebrew and Yiddish. These activities had undoubtedly strengthened the spiritual bonds of the Jewish community in the hard times.

## *Epilogue*

On July 17, 1945, the United States aircrafts bombed the Japanese facilities in Shanghai, but by mistake they hit the Hongkou Ghetto, including the Hungarian restaurant which housed the headquarters of Zionist Organization Shanghai. That was the last blow to Shanghai Zionist movement during the war. One month later, Japan announced the surrender, and the Second World War ended. Since then, the Shanghai Zionist movement had entered a new, but also the last, stage of development.

From 1945 to 1949, due to the changes to the situation in Palestine and the founding of the State of Israel, and since most of the Jews, including the Jewish refugees, went from Shanghai to the United States, Canada, Australia and Israel, the Shanghai Zionist movement gradually shifted their focus from Shanghai (and China) to Israel, the United States and other major Jewish settlements, putting an end to their historical mission in Shanghai and China.

**About the Author** Yu Weidong, team member of the “Research on Jewish Refugees in China” and deputy dean of Shanghai Center of Jewish Studies.

# Chapter 4

## Jewish Refugees in Other Chinese Cities



In the 1930s and 1940s, European Jewish refugees travelled by sea and then by land to seek asylum in Shanghai which became the Noah's Ark for them. Meanwhile, some refugees were stranded in other cities in China on their way to Shanghai and had to settle there. Some refugees who had arrived in Shanghai moved to other Chinese cities later for various reasons. There were still some European Jewish refugees who went directly to other cities in China, as they had connections there. Like other refugees in Shanghai, they received goodwill and generous help from the Chinese people there. These refugees also survived the war in China and developed strong emotional ties with the Chinese people. It is not exactly known how many Chinese cities had received Jewish refugees and it is impossible to survey all these cities. This chapter will only give a brief overview of some major cities that received the most refugees.

### 4.1 Harbin and Dalian

The Jewish refugees would have to pass cities in Northeast China including Harbin and Dalian on their way to Shanghai after they crossed Siberia. These cities were also destinations for some refugees. Among those who settled there, some were stranded on their way to Shanghai while some others first arrived in Shanghai and then moved back there. There were also refugees who received visas from Manchukuo's Consulate in Germany and headed to Northeast China directly.<sup>1</sup>

The Jewish community in Harbin did a good job in resettling the refugees from Germany and Austria. For example, 19 Jewish refugees including a famous pianist and composer from Vienna, his band members and their families were rather comfortably accommodated by local Jewish charity organization in Harbin. Hellmut Stern was a German Jewish refugee and later became the principal violinist

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<sup>1</sup>Wang and Yang (2001).

of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. He described in detail of his exile in Shanghai and then in Harbin in his memoir.<sup>2</sup>

W. Z. Rubinson, a Jewish refugee in Harbin, recalled: “Harbin accepted us with generosity when we fled to China in 1939. At that time, about 150 German refugees came to Harbin, which was a complete strange city for us. The language, culture and lifestyle were totally different. For most of us, Harbin became our ‘new home’ and we were resettled there since then.”<sup>3</sup> As far as he could remember, there were 150 Jewish refugees in Harbin in 1939, and this number rose to somewhere between 200 and 250 in late 1941 when the Pacific War broke out.

Directed by the Jewish leaders in Harbin, the Jewish community in Dalian turned the city, using its geographical location, into a point of entry for Jewish refugees travelling to Northeast China from Shanghai. According to a report on Israel’s Messenger, a group of Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai on an Italian liner in January 1939. Some of them chose Dalian as their destination and finally about 300 immigrants obtained residence permits from Dalian Port Authority.<sup>4</sup>

According to Judas Canel, a stateless Jewish merchant who attended the third Far East Jewish Community Congress in December 1939, representing the Jewish community in Dalian, led by the Jewish merchant Bill Breyer, the Jewish community provided a shelter for refugee children in Dalian in the summer of 1939. The shelter took in 50 poor refugee children coming from Shanghai, including 34 boys and 16 girls, and it was co-financed by the Jewish communities in Harbin and Dalian.<sup>5</sup>

Herman Dicker also mentioned the European Jewish refugees in Dalian in his book *Wanderers and Settlers in the Far East: A Century of Jewish Life in China and Japan*. He said, “From 1938 to 1939, many Central European Jewish refugees went to Dalian by sea without permission and demanded to obtain Manchukuo passports because it was hard for them to make a living in Shanghai.<sup>6</sup> In 1941, there were 259 Jews in Dalian: 143 stateless, 64 Soviets, 5 German, 3 Latvians, 12 Poles, 20 Lithuanians and 3 Czechs.” Herman’s information shows that the Jews coming to China in 1941 were from Germany and Latvia, Poland, Lithuania and the Czech Republic which had been or were soon later occupied by Nazi Germany, so they were surely refugees. Most of the stateless Jews were also refugees, and some others were refugees who had obtained the citizenship of the Soviet Union. To sum up, there were at least 150–200 European Jewish refugees in Dalian at the time.

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<sup>2</sup>Stern (2003).

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Rubinson.

<sup>4</sup>Israel’s Messenger, Jan. 20, 1939.

<sup>5</sup>Fang (1997).

<sup>6</sup>Dicker (1962).

## 4.2 Qingdao

Although the earliest Jews in Qingdao came from Germany, Qingdao became a settlement of Jews due to the influx of Russian Jews after the October Revolution in 1917. Qingdao, used to be a colony of Germany, had similar living conditions with Germany, which attracted some German and Austrian Jewish refugees. As the Nazi anti-Semitism escalated, 65 German-speaking stateless Jewish refugees from central Europe arrived in Qingdao in 1940, adding more German feature to the local Jewish community.<sup>7</sup> In 1941, Peking China Public Commentaries published an article entitled Jewish in the East. It said that, as of October 1940, there were about 221 Jews in Qingdao, including 173 stateless, 48 German, 12 British, 7 American and 5 from other countries.<sup>8</sup> There was no doubt that many of the stateless or German Jews were refugees. According to a study by Will Matzat, a German scholar, Shandong University in Qingdao had many Jewish professors. From 1933 to 1937, at least two professors of Shandong University were Jewish refugees who had fled from Nazi Germany. One was Dr. Joe Stern and the other was Dr. Martin Iger, who was introduced by Stern. In addition, the wife of Professor Kurt Perfer was also a Jewish refugee. In 1938, Shandong University was closed down under Japanese occupation and the Jewish professors were forced to leave Qingdao.

According to the above information, it can be inferred that before the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941, there were at least 100 Jewish refugees in Qingdao. Most of them had arrived between 1939 and 1941 from Germany, Austria and Poland, and many were professors or doctors. Later, some refugees went to Harbin, Tianjin and cities near Qingdao like Zhifu and Dezhou. The Jewish community in Qingdao sent representatives to the Far East Jewish Congresses in 1937, 1938 and 1939. In 1939, chairman of the Jewish Community of Qingdao reported to the Congress that the Qingdao Community had already enough resources, and the Jewish refugees who had joined them had been properly accommodated and had settled down.<sup>9</sup>

As Jewish refugee Freidrich Grosch recalled: “In 1939, after 30 days on sea, we finally arrived in Shanghai. At that time, a French Jew named Ginsburg living in Qingdao suggested that we move to Qingdao because we could find jobs there and the living conditions were much better than in Shanghai. We got our Passes to travel from Shanghai to Qingdao from the Japanese within one day. After arriving in Qingdao, we lived in an apartment at 42 Guangxi Road, opposite the police station which was a Victorian building, and not too far from the pier. We earned some money by renting our rooms to the US Navy after the Americans came to Qingdao. Charles could speak some Chinese and found a job as a junior receptionist. From 1939 to 1940, he worked for the Edgewater Hotel run by a Jew. The hotel was first rented to US Navy officers and then taken over by the Japanese after 1940. At that time, all foreigners in Qingdao were demanded to wear an armband that showed their

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<sup>7</sup>Matzat (2001).

<sup>8</sup>Dongshanziming, Trans. Wu Mingtang, Jews in China, Hoover Library and Archives, Stanford University, USA.

<sup>9</sup>Fang (1996).

nationality. I cannot remember whether our armbands were stamped with ‘Austrian’ or ‘Jew’. During World War II, only 2000 Europeans lived in Qingdao, half of whom were German. Qingdao had only a very small Jewish community and most of them came from Harbin and few from Shanghai like us.”<sup>10</sup>

Freidrich’s account tells how a Jewish refugee family managed a living in wartime Qingdao.

### 4.3 Tianjin

In 1901, there were about 100 Jews in Tianjin (Tientsin). The number rose to 200 in 1920, and more than 500 in 1930. By 1935, the number of Jews had gone up to 1500. After 1938, more than 200 German and Austrian Jewish refugees came to Tianjin, who then joined the Hebrew Association of Tientsin (THA), the main Jewish organization in Tientsin. Later, they set up their own organization, the European Jewish Immigrant Association (EJIA), which included all Jewish refugees coming to Tianjin to escape the Nazi persecution. About 20 German and Austrian Jews received an allowance each of around 130,000 guobi per month from the THA.<sup>11</sup>

Afterwards, as it became very difficult for Jewish refugees to directly enter Shanghai, some Jewish refugees got temporary or transit visas to some other countries but they managed to arrive in the Japanese-controlled North China via the Soviet Union and “Manchukuo”. Some of them came to Tianjin. Jewish refugees holding such visas had been given only a temporary permit, but some managed to obtain visa extension and permit for long-term residence. According to the Report on Tianjin Refugees published during World War II, “On December 8, 1939, 169 European Jewish refugees were given entry permits to Tianjin, 56 of whom had arrived, and the applications of other 128 refugees remain pending. The Jewish community in Tianjin will try to solve the refugee problems, such as employment and financial support. But there were only about 1800 Jews in Tianjin. The influx of refugees amid the economic depression will surely affect the living conditions of the existing Jewish community. Agricultural migration can be a good solution, such as moving to the Sanhe area of Inner Mongolia.” After the Pearl Harbor attack in December 1941, the Japanese authorities imposed tougher restrictions and since then almost no Jewish refugees had entered Tianjin.<sup>12</sup>

In 1943, it came out that seven European Jewish refugee families had received financial support from the German Consulate in Tianjin, conflicts arose among the Jewish refugees. The recipient families claimed that Fritz Wiedemann, the German consul in Tientsin, was an anti-Nazi with sympathy for Jews.<sup>13</sup> However, most mem-

<sup>10</sup>Pan (2015).

<sup>11</sup>Pan (2015).

<sup>12</sup>M. W. Beckelman, The Jewish Community of Tientsin.

<sup>13</sup>According to some articles, Weidmann, consul of German consulate in Tianjin, was against Nazis but some articles said he was not.

bers of the EJIA believed that Fritz Wiedemann had evil intentions, so his offer of financial aid must not be accepted. It is hard to tell who were right. After intense debates, the seven Jewish families were expelled from the EJIA and later expelled from the THA. The seven families were returned to the EJIA in 1945 after they promised that they would not accept official German aid any longer. Two of the seven families failed to honor their promises and were expelled again. No one knew exactly whether they continued to receive Fritz Wiedemann's aid. This was the only case in the history of the Jewish community in Tianjin that any Jewish families were expelled from the community due to political issues. In fact, the Jews did not suffer so much in Tianjin as imagined during the war. As North China, including Tianjin, had been already occupied by the Japanese after the Lugou Bridge Incident in 1937, no fierce battles like Battle of Shanghai had ravaged this area.

Isabelle Maynard depicted the life of Jewish refugees here in her autobiographic novel *China Dreams: Growing Up Jewish in Tientsin*. In this story, she mentioned a Jewish violinist called Berman who came from Germany and played in a quartet at Victoria Cafe in the Little White House. He had played for the Berlin Philharmonic before the war and fled to Tianjin to escape the Holocaust. After arriving in Tianjin, he set up a small band with his friends and performed at Victoria Cafe to earn some money. That income was not enough to support his family, so Berman took two other jobs. He and his friends played at almost every wedding and banquet of the wealthy families around Tianjin. He also taught violin lessons. He made himself so busy that people could always see him quickly wipe away the sweat from his face while he played, but he had never missed a note. His music reminded the audience of the ripples of the Danube and the breathtaking beauty of the forest of Vienna. His heart often ached, however, as he missed his homeland.<sup>14</sup>

Benjamin Kabulianski, a Tianjin Jew now living in Israel, insisted that the Jewish community in Tianjin had played a significant role, when he recalled that history. It offered a haven for the Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust. As soon as Jewish refugees arrived in Tianjin, the Jewish community had already prepared necessary social conditions for them, including Jewish communal institutions. They had a synagogue, a Jewish club, and their children could go to the Tianjin Jewish School (TJS). Many of these refugees were specialists in a certain field, and had brought many positive effects on the Jewish community in Tianjin.<sup>15</sup>

## 4.4 Hong Kong

According to a report published in February 1939, about 2500 Jews arrived in Hong Kong since anti-Semitism surged in Nazi Germany. Many of them had come from Shanghai and some came directly from Europe. To be sure, most of them were refugees.

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<sup>14</sup>Song (2004, 2007).

<sup>15</sup>Interview with Kabulianski.

According to Israel's Messenger, hundreds of Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria arrived in Hong Kong onboard Conte Biancamano of Lloyd Triestino on August 28, 1939 when Japanese authorities and the authorities of the International Settlement and foreign concessions began to take measures to stem Jewish immigration.<sup>16</sup>

However, in September 1939, the UK declared war on Germany, hundreds of German Jews who had been already deprived of their German citizenship were deported from Hong Kong and Singapore to Shanghai as enemy aliens. The problem was the authority of Shanghai's International Settlement under the control of the UK refused to take in these Jews.

## 4.5 Chongqing

As recent memoirs of former Jewish refugees disclose, a very small number of European Jewish refugees went to Chongqing, the wartime capital of the Republic of China. Wolfgang Karfunkel detailed his and his father's runaway to Chongqing in his memoir *From Nazi Germany to War-torn Central China*:

Most Jewish immigrants came to Shanghai onboard liners from Italy and they got protection in Shanghai. Some immigrants took a train from Poland to Dalian Port, Manchuria, via Siberia. Then they boarded Japanese steamers to Shanghai, which took them 3 days. We inquired the ticket office and were told that the tickets had been booked for the next year. In addition, our train needed to go through Manchuria which then had been occupied by Japan, so we needed a transit visa. However, the Japanese Consulate directly rejected our application.

Uncle Lyon, my father's elder brother, sent us a letter from China. He told us that he and his wife Vledder and his son's family all lived in Chongqing, the wartime capital of the Republic of China. According to his own experience and firsthand source, Uncle Lyon thought it would be safer to stay closer with the Chinese government in Chongqing. That was on the eve of the Pacific War and travel agencies couldn't get us to Shanghai. In that context, we had no choice but to go to Chongqing. Later, after the Pacific War broke out, Japan gave up their plan on the Jews in Northeast China, which put the Jews in harder circumstances in Harbin. The Jews in Shanghai were forced to move into the ghetto in Hongkou, where life was extremely difficult and there was no freedom. Chongqing turned out to be a wise choice.

Correspondence between my father and my uncle was very slow. My father could receive a letter from my uncle in weeks. My uncle told us in a letter that he was familiar with some Chinese bigwigs, so he could get us an entry visa to mainland China. At that time, only Shanghai didn't require a visa and people could go there by ship or train via Siberia. Therefore, we were thrilled at the news. It meant that we could obtain the visa to mainland China in Berlin and go to Chongqing instead of Shanghai! Every day, I went to different travel agencies with my father, trying to find

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<sup>16</sup>Israel's Messenger, Sep. 12, 1939.

out a way to China. They all told us that we could take the Trans-Siberian Railway via Russia and Manchuria but first we needed to obtain a Japanese transit visa, which was completely impossible. At every agency, we needed to wait for several hours, but their answers were disappointing: ‘Sorry, we can’t. Next one, please.’

Luckily, a travel agency called Cook let us see a silver lining. They said that a new China-Russian air route to Urumqi was opened, and we could take the flight in Almaty, Russia, not far from China’s border. Upon arriving Urumqi, we could take a flight of the Eurasia Airlines to Chongqing where my uncle Lyon lived. What we needed was the transit visa of Russia. We submitted the visa application to the Soviet Union’s Consulate and were told that we had to wait patiently for the approval from Moscow. My father told the Consulate’s staff that Rosa Luxemburg<sup>17</sup> was our relative. We hoped this relationship could help us get the visa sooner but we still waited a long time.

Finally, after several months, we were informed that our visa application had been approved and we needed to take our passports to the Consulate to have them stamped. My excitement was beyond words and I even fondly dreamt of living in the dessert and staying in a tent for several days. A few days later, we bid farewell to my aunt and her husband who had lived with us for two years. At that time, the Nazi regime imposed higher and higher Reich Flight Tax on departing Jews. Jews could only take five Reich marks with them when they went abroad. Other countries also set high thresholds for accepting the immigrants. Besides the refugee entry quota, they would also screen the refugees according to their assets, occupation and skill. For example, Palestine required the immigrants to pay 2000 lb for entry, which was unaffordable for the dispossessed Jews. Jews who have managed to escape the Nazis were basically penniless and not everyone could escape. My aunt and her husband had no chance. Although there was no death camp or gas chamber at that time, I could still guess what was waiting for them in Germany. Several years later, we heard that they ‘went away’ in the Concentration Camp.”<sup>18</sup>

Karfunkel and his father boarded the train to Moscow with mixed feelings. They were uncertain whether they could arrive in China safely. Finally, they arrived in Almaty and stayed there for five days. Then they took a flight to Urumqi. After a transfer in Lanzhou, they finally arrived in Chongqing.<sup>19</sup>

Karfunkel and his father stayed in Chongqing during the war. Karfunkel’s father passed away in Chongqing soon after the war. Karfunkel was married to a Chinese girl, Liu Sulan, and they moved to Israel in 1951. That’s how his story ended.

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<sup>17</sup>Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919), born in a Jewish family, was the leader of the German and Polish workers and the founder of the German Communist Party. He was killed when he led the Berlin workers’ uprising in January 1919.

<sup>18</sup>Karfunkel (2014).

<sup>19</sup>Karfunkel (2014).

## 4.6 Conclusions

We can draw the following conclusions from the above information:

1. Not only Shanghai but also several other Chinese cities accepted Jewish refugees from Europe. Therefore, as we focus on the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, we should also consider the Jewish refugees in other Chinese cities.
2. In addition to Shanghai, Jewish refugees mainly went to Northern Chinese cities, such as Harbin, Dalian, Tianjin and Qingdao, as well as Beijing, Shenyang, Changchun, Qiqihar, Hailar and Manchuria that haven't been mentioned above. It was partly because Japan established Manchukuo, a puppet government, in Northeast China in 1932 and then occupied a large area of North China after 1937. Therefore, unlike the rest of China, North China was stabler and more suitable for the Jewish refugees.
3. As the story of Chongqing above shows, a small number of Jewish refugees also came to areas under China's firm control, just like Chongqing, which indicates their confidence in China's final victory. From this, it can be inferred that other hinterland cities of China which were still safe from Japanese invasion, including Xi'an, Chengdu, Kunming, Lanzhou and Urumqi, may also shelter Jewish refugees. More information must be collected about them for further study.

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## Chapter 5

# The Final Solution for Jewish Refugees in Shanghai and the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees



Due to the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the living conditions of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai worsened; they even faced danger. There were two reasons. First, as Japan declared war on the UK and the United States and took over the International Settlement, JDC and other organizations had to stop sending money to Shanghai under Japanese occupation according to the restrictions imposed by the US and other Allies. Second, most Sephardi Jewish merchants were British, and they were jailed by the Japanese as enemy aliens and their assets were confiscated. Naturally, they were unable to provide any further relief for the afflicted refugees. JDC called the heads of the Jewish community in Shanghai together to find ways to help them out, such as streamlining relief agencies and cutting daily expenses and raising funds from the wealthier Jews in Shanghai. At the same time, Japan and the Soviet Union were not at war, so the Russian Jews used their identity as aliens from a “neutral state” to help the refugees. They helped not only Jews from Eastern European, but also German and Austrian Jewish refugees. Some Russian Jews established the Central European Refugee Committee which fed at least 600–700 hungry Central and Eastern European Jewish kids.<sup>1</sup> The German and Austrian Jewish refugees established the Kitchen Fund and launched a Patenschaft project to raise funds.

Just as the Jewish refugees managed to survive, an evil plan that targeted all Jews in Shanghai was proposed.

### 5.1 The Final Solution in Shanghai: The Meisinger Plan

After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, Japan changed their attitudes to the Jews. To make things worse, shortly after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Colonel Josef Meisinger, Gestapo chief in East Asia, arrived in Shanghai in summer 1942. He proposed the “Final Solution in Shanghai”, demanding that Japanese authorities

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<sup>1</sup>Kranzler (1991).

exterminate all Jews in Shanghai in the German way. This Final Solution was also known as the Meisinger Plan.

Rabbi Marvin Tokayer described the Meisinger Plan as follows. It had two steps. Step one was to arrest all Jews in Shanghai in a surprise attack as they were spending the Jewish New Year with families; step two was to “deal with” the problem they were assumed to create in a decisive manner. The plan suggested three ways of dealing with these Jews: (1) they could be placed on old ships and set adrift at sea so that they would eventually die of hunger; (2) they could be forced to toil themselves to death in the abandoned salt mines on the upper reaches of the Huangpu River; (3) or the Japanese could set up concentration camps on Chongming Island where the Jews would be subject to medical experiments and die of sufferings.<sup>2</sup> Laura Margolis, the JDC representative in Shanghai, recalled: “The Japanese anti-Western sentiment soared in 1942. The gendarmerie officers who arrived lately from Tokyo patrolled Hongkou every day. Captain Koreshige Inuzuka had left Shanghai and his successor Captain Sagittarius was not so much interested in the Jewish issue. One day, Peretz told us that the Japanese were hatching a murderous conspiracy against the Jewish refugees. They would force all refugees onboard ships and sink them. He asked us to figure out a solution. We also got the same news from other reliable sources.”<sup>3</sup>

## 5.2 The Designated Area for Stateless Refugees

The Final Solution caused fierce controversy in Japan. The Japanese leaders finally decided not to kill the Jews, but they still had to do something to satisfy Nazi Germany. The reasons why Japanese authorities had chosen the compromised way are detailed below.

Although the Final Solution was not put into effect, the Japanese authorities in Shanghai set up a Designated Area for Stateless Refugees in February 1943, which was similar to a concentration camp. That was also the result of compromise. On February 6, the Shanghai Gazette published an article to promote the idea of establishing the restricted sector (Shanghai ghetto). The article argued that the Abraham family, the Hayims, Sir Victor Sassoon and many famous Jewish tycoons in Shanghai had got rich by selling opium and other disgraceful means. These people were labeled as typical Jews who were evil. On February 18, both Shanghai newspapers and radio stations announced the Proclamation Concerning Restriction of Residence and Business of Stateless Refugees issued by the Japanese authorities in Shanghai:

- I. Due to military necessity, places of residence and business of stateless refugees in the Shanghai area shall hereafter be restricted to the under mentioned area in the International Settlement. East of the line connecting Chaufong Road (now Gaoyang Road), Muirhead Road (now Haimen Road) and Dent Road (now Dongtu Road); West of Yangzepoo Creek (now Yangshupu Road); North of

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<sup>2</sup>Tokayer and Swartz (2004).

<sup>3</sup>Pan et al. (1995).

the line connecting East Seward Road (now East Changzhi Road) and Wayside Road (now Huoshan Road); and South of the boundary of the International Settlement.

- II. The stateless refugees at present residing and/or carrying on business in the district other than the above area shall remove their places of residences and/or business into the area designated above by May 18, 1943. Permission must be obtained from the Japanese authorities for the transfer, sale purchase or lease of rooms, houses, shops or other establishments, which are situated outside the designated area and now being occupied or used by stateless refugees.
- III. Persons other than stateless refugees shall not remove into the area mentioned in Article I without permission of the Japanese authorities.
- IV. Persons who violate the PROCLAMATION or obstruct its enforcement shall be liable to severe punishment.

Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Army in the Shanghai Area

Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Shanghai Area

February 18, 1943<sup>4</sup>

Although words like “Jews” or “Ghetto” were not used in the Proclamation, an article published on the same paper defined “stateless refugees” as those who “arrived in Shanghai since 1937 from Germany (including former Austria and Czechoslovakia), Hungary and former Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and have no nationality at present”. That definition clearly referred to European Jewish refugees. Finally, about 14,000 (or 18,000 according to another source) Jewish refugees, including 2800 refugees in temporary shelters, were forced to move into the designated area. On February 23, Russian Ashkenazi Jews in Shanghai attended a meeting at the Jews club convened by Masao Kubota, the Japanese official in charge of the relocation. Kubota argued that the Proclamation did not mean the Japanese people were anti-Semitic; it had been issued due to the short supply of housing and food in Shanghai. He also urged the Russian Ashkenazi Jews to help cope with the shortage. In effect, Kubota’s speech was an ultimatum. He threatened that any Jews who did not cooperate with the Japanese authorities would be “severely punished”.

From then on, the European Jewish refugees started their difficult life in the Shanghai Ghetto. Before that, some English Sephardi Jews had already been jailed as enemy aliens. Although the Russian Jews did not lose their freedom, they also faced with the danger that might come upon them any time.

### 5.3 Postwar Controversies on the Meisinger Plan

After World War II, the international community was divided over the Meisinger plan. The controversy focused on two questions: First, was there a Meisinger plan? Second, what is the main proposal of the Meisinger plan?

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<sup>4</sup>Newspaper, 18 Feb., 1943.

The first question stems from the fact that the original paperwork of the “Final Solution in Shanghai” has never been found. In fact, before the war ended, the German and Japanese authorities had destroyed a large quantity of documents and archives related to massacres and persecutions that could be used as proof of their crime, including documents bearing the “Final Solution in Shanghai”. Therefore, some people doubted the existence of the so-called Meisinger plan, just as some people denied Nanking Massacre and the death camp in Auschwitz. A number of righteous international scholars, however, insisted that oral accounts are equally valid proof, so they took pains to interview many witnesses. Marvin Tokayer spent decades interviewing witnesses including Laura Margolis and Mitsugi Shibata, then consul general of Japan in Shanghai, and finally figured out the basic idea of the Meisinger plan. Researchers from leading Holocaust institutes, including the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, Hoover Institution at Stanford University, the Sino-Judaic Institute, the Yivo Institute, the Leo Baeck Institute and Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, also interviewed many Shanghai Jews and confirmed the existence of the “Final Solution in Shanghai”.

The second dispute concerns the steps of implementing the Meisinger Plan described in *The Fugu Plan: The Untold Story of the Japanese*. Some argue the story may be just hearsay and later made appalling by the authors. However, in recent years, this dispute over the steps has basically disappeared because the plan to exterminate Jews in Shanghai has been proved and recognized to be true and there is no point figuring out the exact measures that the Nazis planned to kill Jews.

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## Chapter 6

# Jewish Refugees and the Chinese People: Friendship in a Troubled Time



When they landed in China, the Jewish refugees were put in close relations with the local Chinese. Before they came, the relations between the Chinese and the Sephardi Jews and the Russian Jews had evolved for about a century. In the historical context of the Holocaust and the Anti-Fascist War, the relations between Jews and Chinese got very close as they met with similar hardships and mutual assistance was so much needed in the dark days.

### 6.1 The Sino-Jewish Relationship Before Jewish Refugees Arrived in China

Sephardi Jewish merchants gathered in Shanghai and Hong Kong after 1840. As they were mostly British, they held themselves above their ordinary Chinese neighbors. On one hand, although Sephardi Jews had acquired the British citizenship, they were still treated as pagans by the Anglo-Saxon gentile society. Therefore, they must try to integrate into the British culture and remove British upper classes' prejudices against them. On the other hand, in China, their British citizenship gave all the privileges available to any British, which was critical for their business success in the semifeudal and semicolonial China. They actively engaged with the British community. They also dealt with Chinese, but they mainly networked with compradors, bureaucrats and tycoons who were the most Westernized Chinese at that time. They seldom had any access to the lower and middle classes who represented the real Chinese culture. One good example is that most Sephardi Jews in China often spoke English and few people studied Chinese seriously. Very few could speak Mandarin or local dialects such as Shanghainese and Cantonese. The Sephardi Jews published newspapers and magazines, but they catered to their own community. After visiting a Jewish club in Hong Kong in 1925, a British Jewish activist wrote: "This club is set up like London's West End or a political club, where people feel comfortable. There is a piano in a big and well-decorated room. People can rest, enjoy music or listen to speeches here."

There is also a billiard saloon that is rarely overlooked and a bar with a Chinese bartender in white shirt who can make all kinds of cocktails.”<sup>1</sup> In short, the club had barely any Chinese or Jewish characteristics.

However, there are exceptions. One exception was Silas Aaron Hardoon, a Sephardi Jewish tycoon in Shanghai. He was deeply affected by the Chinese culture. An important reason is that he married a Chinese woman, which was rare among the Sephardi Jews. In his middle age, he became a devout Buddhist. He also liked reading Chinese literature and history books. He did not only enjoy but also actively support the promotion of traditional Chinese culture. Many famous Chinese scholars and artists including Wang Guowei, Luo Zhenyu, Zou Jinshu, Zhang Yishan, Fei Shujie and Xu Beihong had benefitted from his generosity. As Nora Hardoon, his daughter, recalled, they usually prepared two meals at home at the same time. One was Chinese and the other was Jewish. Every family member could choose either meal as they liked. Silas Hardoon often ate Jewish meals but sometimes he also tried the Chinese.<sup>2</sup> Even after his death, two funerals were held separately: one followed Judaism and the other followed Buddhism.<sup>3</sup>

It's worth mentioning that the cultural gap between the Sephardi Jews and the Chinese had not barred the wealthy Sephardi Jews from financially supporting the development of the Chinese culture and education, which was partly because they respected the Chinese culture and partly because they wanted to enlarge their social circles. Like the Hardoon family, the Kadoorie family also built many schools for Chinese students in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Guangdong Province.

The Russian Jews in China who had suffered from anti-Semitism usually didn't consider Russia as their homeland; instead, they hoped to settle in China. For example, as Rena Krasno said, a Russian Jew who was born in Shanghai, “They had a strong sense of belonging in this city and didn't have any plan to leave.”<sup>4</sup> The Russian Jews in Tianjin held the same opinion, “We never thought of leaving Tianjin. Who would leave such a good place? We couldn't have found any better place.”<sup>5</sup> The same opinion was shared by the Russian Jews in Harbin. Therefore, compared with Sephardi Jews, Russian Jews were more eager to engage with the Chinese society and culture, and kept closer contacts with the local Chinese people at all levels of society.

Most Russian Jews in China ran small businesses or served as junior employees, which gave them more access to the lower and middle classes of China. They seldom flagged their Russian citizenship, which helped lower the barrier between them and the local Chinese. Ben Levaco, a Russian Jewish merchant who ran a casing business in north China, recalled that in order to procure raw materials, he went to many

<sup>1</sup>Cohen (1925).

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Nora Hardoon, Shanghai, June 22, 1999.

<sup>3</sup>Pan et al. (1995, p. 130).

<sup>4</sup>Krasno (2008).

<sup>5</sup>Leora Shluger Forman, Monica Morris Schwartz, The Russian Jews of Tientsin, China, 1900–1950. The two authors were Russian Jews who lived in Tianjin at that time and this was their speech at the University of Chicago.

towns and villages in the Northeast, Inner Mongolia and north China. He made many Chinese friends on his trips.<sup>6</sup> According to S. Ginsbourg, a Russian Jew who became a professor at Shandong University after 1949, his father had worked in a factory that processed timber for Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria. His father had travelled extensively, going through almost all forest regions within thousands of miles, and dealt with Chinese people almost every day.<sup>7</sup> The Russian Jews had frequent contacts with their Chinese friends and neighbors, so more Russian Jews could speak mandarin and even local dialects than the Sephardi Jews. According to T. Kaufman, son of Henry Kaufman who was leader of the Jewish Community in Harbin, some Russian Jews could speak mandarin with northeastern accent at that time in Harbin.<sup>8</sup> Sam Muller, a Russian Jew born in Tianjin, could still speak the Tianjin dialect. As he recalled, a lot of Russian Jews in Tianjin could speak the Tianjin dialect.<sup>9</sup>

Likewise, more Russian Jews had a Chinese spouse than the Sephardi Jews, which is a proof of the close relationship between the Russian Jews and Chinese. Interestingly, in Harbin, Tianjin and Shanghai, almost all Russian Jewish children were brought up by Chinese nannies who they called amah, so they were exposed to the Chinese culture from early childhood. Influenced by their amah, the kids spoke Chinese as their mother tongue, which they continued after they grew up. Two Jews from Tianjin met a Jewish boy in the USA. The boy had been born in China and he was still a kid when he left China. He was studying Chinese. He said, “When I can speak Chinese well, I will go back to China to look for my amah. Maybe she still loves me as much as before.”<sup>10</sup>

Due to their close engagement with the Chinese society, many Russian Jews were deeply attracted and influenced by the Chinese culture. S. Ginsbourg appreciated the Peking Opera “Farewell, My Concubine” very much. He said, “Exaggeration was everywhere in the opera. Even before the curtain parted, the music of gongs, drums and bugles was already resounding to the skies. The performers’ movements and gestures were very dramatic. Their costumes were gorgeous. They tossed their long and wide sleeves around. They wore different facial makeup, including white, black, yellow, red, and varicolored ones. I could appreciate the beauty in the music, the performance and especially the concubine’s sword dance … Mei Lanfang’s elegant movements made me forget that he was a man playing a female role.”<sup>11</sup> His appreciation was shared by other Russian Jews. Though they didn’t understand the Chinese culture very much, they tried hard to learn about it; they gradually saw the beauty in the Chinese culture and were attracted. So was Aaron Avshalomoff, a Russian Jewish musician. Aaron Avshalomoff enjoyed Chinese music very much, and tried

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Levaco, Shanghai, 29 April, 1992.

<sup>7</sup>Ginsbourg (1991, p. 2).

<sup>8</sup>Interview with Kaufman, Shanghai, 18 April, 1994.

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Kaufman, Shanghai, 18 April, 1994.

<sup>10</sup>Speech of Leora Shluger Forman, Monica Morris Schwartz, The Russian Jews of Tientsin, China, 1900–1950.

<sup>11</sup>Ginsbourg (1991, p. 85).

to integrate traditional Chinese music into his own. Therefore, many of his works combine of Chinese and Western styles. In addition to Chinese dramas, many Russian Jews were also “addicted” to traditional Chinese medicine, Chinese Tai Chi and Qigong. They enjoyed Chinese food and gave themselves Chinese names. Compared with Sephardi Jews, Russian Jews were much more influenced by Chinese culture.

Of course, the Russian Jews also influenced their guest country and cities with their own cultural traditions. They brought Russian Jewish music and translated Russian works into Chinese. For example, the Russian Jewish pianist Henri Margolinski introduced Mikhail Glinka and his Ivan Susanin to the Chinese audience. Jewish translators from Russia translated the works of many famous writers like Sholem Aleichem and Haim Bialik from Hebrew or Yiddish to English and even Chinese. Many Jewish musicians and dancers taught in Chinese schools and music conservatories. Fu Cong, the first Chinese winner of international piano competitions, was a student of Mrs. Ada Bronstein, the Russian Jewish pianist.<sup>12</sup>

## 6.2 Jewish Refugees and the Chinese People: Friendship in the Troubled Environment

In terms of contacts and communication with the Chinese people, the European Jewish refugees and the Russian Jews shared similarities but still differed. Both lived in an environment which gave them an access to the lower-class Chinese, thus exposing them to the real Chinese culture and tradition. Among the differences, one was that the Russian Jews had a long-term view regarding their engagement with the Chinese as they planned to settle in China, while the Jewish refugees from Europe only regarded Shanghai as a temporary refuge and did not treat their relationship with the local Chinese in a long-term manner. Another difference was that the Russian Jews’ contacts with the Chinese culture took place throughout China and lasted very long, while the European Jewish refugees got in touch with the Chinese people and Chinese culture in the hard times. Their cultural exchanges mainly took place in Shanghai from 1938 to 1945.

Most of the European Jewish refugees were penniless when they landed in Shanghai. They were total strangers here, and couldn’t speak Chinese or English. They knew nothing about this oriental city or the local people. In a word, they began to reach out to Chinese society in a desperate situation. They stayed in Chinese residents’ houses, went to Chinese hospitals, began to eat local Shanghai foods which were very different, and some had to wear Chinese-style clothes. They followed the Chinese way of life in all aspects. As Jewish refugee Frank Theyleg wrote in his memoir, “As soon as I arrived in Shanghai, I tried to ‘localize’ myself. I tried almost all kinds of Chinese foods, and I didn’t feel very uncomfortable.”<sup>13</sup> William Schurtman, who now lives in New York, recalled: “My mother had to cook on a small coal stove, which was

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<sup>12</sup>Min (1990).

<sup>13</sup>Pan et al. (1995, p. 148).

as small as a flower pot. You need to keep fanning to get the flames up. It took so long to boil water that it became my daily task to buy hot water from a public stove, which was called a tiger stove by the locals. Tiger stoves could be found on any street in Shanghai (at least in the poor areas).<sup>14</sup> It is clear that the Jewish refugees were struggling to adapt to the poor living conditions that the impoverished Chinese had got used to.

However, when they gradually adapted to the conditions and managed to meet their basic living needs, they began to create an environment with their own cultural characteristics in this city. As George Reinisch, a Jewish refugee, wrote in his memoirs, “Over time, refugees gradually got comfortable with the local way of life, but they still tried to preserve their Central European lifestyle.”<sup>15</sup> In Hongkou where the majority of refugees were sheltered, refugees repaired blocks of rundown houses damaged during the Battle of Shanghai and even built new homes and shops. A variety of shops were opened by the refugees, including restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies, bakeries, barber shops, tailors, shoes and hats stores, clothing stores, and open-air cafés which were an essential part of their life in Vienna. Later, some refugees even built small factories to produce soaps, candles, knits, leather products and European foods like sausages, sweets and soft drinks. These shops and factories primarily served the Jewish refugees at first, but later found a big market among the local Chinese people, and some European goods were very popular with the Chinese. There were a lot of German signboards along the streets and the area looked like a small town in Germany or Austria. That area was nicknamed “Little Vienna.”

In this environment, the Chinese and Jews had closer contacts with each other. Many Chinese people in Hongkou learned to speak German, and some Jewish refugees learned to speak Mandarin and Shanghainese. As Frank Theyleg recalled, “I asked every Chinese I met to teach me how to say the things I saw in Chinese. I went to see Chinese movies and learned to write Chinese characters. I picked up very soon. People thought I was Chinese on the phone, and I could read Chinese newspapers by and large.”<sup>16</sup> Thanks to his fluent Chinese, he ran a business with Chinese partners and made profits. Of course, not many people could speak Chinese as well as Frank Theyleg, but most refugees could communicate with the Chinese with simple Mandarin or Shanghainese, and their children getting along with Chinese kids learned authentic Shanghainese.

After the establishment of the ghetto in February 1943, the Jewish refugees experienced the most difficult period of their stay in Shanghai. But this had not affected their interactions with their Chinese neighbors; instead they had made even closer contacts during the hard times. Lilli Finkelstein, a former Jewish refugee, wrote in her memoir, “We found that our Chinese neighbors were very friendly. They knew how difficult our situation was, but they didn’t take advantage of that. Remember, they were the poorest of the poor and received no education. I made friends with one or two Chinese women. A Chinese family once invited us to their New Year din-

<sup>14</sup> Interview with William Schurtman, New York, June 16, 1996.

<sup>15</sup> Pan et al. (1995, p. 40).

<sup>16</sup> Pan et al. (1995, p. 148).

ner.”<sup>17</sup> Wang Faliang, one of their neighbors, recalled: “When Jews suffered from Hitler, the Japanese persecuted us Chinese. We shared the hard times with the Jewish refugees, and we were friendly to each other and helped each other. We felt so hard when they left after the war.”<sup>18</sup> William Schurtman believed that the Jewish refugees were thankful to the Chinese for their friendliness that they had never felt in Europe. In Europe, when Jews went into trouble, some Christians would jump at them and even loot their properties.<sup>19</sup> It must be mentioned, however, that the Chinese and Jews rarely wedded each other although they shared weal and woe. Because most of the Jewish refugees fled to Shanghai together with their families and they regarded Shanghai as a temporary refuge.

There were a lot of talented people among the Jewish refugees. They brought their art and culture to Shanghai. For instance, they performed the Yiddish drama and played Yiddish music, giving the Chinese audience the first idea of art from Central Europe. Among the Jewish refugees, at least 13 musicians taught at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music,<sup>20</sup> cultivating a large number of Chinese musicians, many of whom later became masters and pioneers in the Chinese music community. There were also many medical professors and doctors who brought the most advanced medical theories and techniques from Europe and the United States to China and also trained a group of Chinese doctors.

While they struggle to survive, the Jewish refugees became familiar with Chinese tradition and enjoyed what they didn’t feel comfortable with at first. Many Russian Jews, for example, loved Chinese opera, Chinese cuisine, Mandarin or local dialects. Some of them even had Chinese names. The Jewish refugee painter Friedrich Schiff (Chinese name: Xu Fu) drew a comic book “I Love Chinese” which reflected the attitude of most Jewish refugees. As Wang Zhu, China’s former ambassador to Austria, recalled, when he was serving his term in Vienna, he often met with Shanghai Jews and they could talk to him in Shanghainese; when he invited them to dinner, these Shanghai Jews asked for flatbread, fried dough sticks, soy milk, plus fermented bean curd and pickled cucumbers they used to have in Shanghai. Some would invite the ambassador and his wife to their home and they used the same courtesy in Shanghai using authentic Shanghainese: “Excuse us for our small and dirty room.”<sup>21</sup>

In the toughest years during World War II, the friendship between the European Jewish refugees in Shanghai and the local Chinese people is a perfect proof of cultural integration in adversity. They created an unforgettable chapter in the history of the Sino-Jewish relationship.

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<sup>17</sup>Pan et al. (1995, p. 163).

<sup>18</sup>Interview with Wang Faliang, Shanghai, 18 April, 1994.

<sup>19</sup>Interview with William Schurtman.

<sup>20</sup>Tang (1998). The author’s later monograph “The Music Life of the Jewish Community in Shanghai” (Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press, 2007) describes the Jewish musicians teaching at other universities in Shanghai.

<sup>21</sup>Xu (2007).

## 6.3 Sino-Jewish Friendship Amid the Anti-fascist Fight and Jews in the Chinese Revolution

Both the Chinese and Jews have suffered a lot in history. The Second World War, in particular, wreaked havoc on both. When the Jews were brutally slaughtered by the German Nazis, the Chinese people were forced to fight back against the Japanese invaders. The similar sufferings made the Chinese people and Jews in China sympathetic with each other and created a strong bond of friendship between them and an unforgettable history of Sino-Jewish engagement.

The Chinese people had protested against the Nazi persecution of Jews, but also offered their hands and even properties to help the Jews arriving in China as refugees. As mentioned above, the local Chinese residents in Hongkou had helped the Jewish refugees although they were also struggling in a difficult situation. In fact, many of these Chinese were living a miserable life after the Battle of Shanghai. As Wang Faliang recalled: “We were struggling to survive; we didn’t know what would happen in the future, but we still did everything possible to help the Jewish refugees in Hongkou.”<sup>22</sup> Heinz Cohn, a former Jewish refugee now living in Los Angeles, is grateful to the Chinese people for their generous help. He told the LA Times, “I will always thank the Chinese people. I would not have made it here without them.”<sup>23</sup> The Shanghai Jews and their families built a monument in Hongkou District in 1994 as a symbol of their gratitude to the Chinese people for their generosity.

### 6.3.1 *The Jewish Settlement Plan of the Republic of China*

Just as the Nazi anti-Semitism evolved into the Holocaust, Western countries such as the United States and the UK imposed restrictions on Jewish immigration, but Shanghai kept its door open to them. Moreover, according to recently discovered and collected documents, the government of the Republic of China had planned to establish a Jewish settlement in Yunnan Province where more Jewish refugees could be safely accommodated.

On February 17, 1939, Sun Ke, son of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen and then member of the Supreme National Defense Council, proposed to settle the desperate Jewish refugees from Europe in southwestern China. He pointed out in his proposal that the total Jewish population was over 16 million, of which approximately 4 million were living in the USA, about 3 million in Poland and the Soviet Union, and the rest was dispersed around the world. The Jewish people had suffered tragically from the loss of homeland. The recent rise of Fascism in Europe had led to more brutal persecution of Jews, especially in Nazi Germany. Following the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany in 1938, a new wave of Anti-semitism surged. The assassination of German

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<sup>22</sup>Interview with Wang Faliang.

<sup>23</sup>Los Angeles Times, US, July 15, 1997.

diplomat Ernst vom Rath in Paris by Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew, triggered even worse and crueler Anti-semitic slaughter and expulsion. Shanghai would be forced to control the influx of European refugees as it was unable to accommodate more. In this context, it was necessary to designate an area for Jewish settlement in the southwestern frontier of China. Sun Ke believed that the Jewish settlement was in line with his father's will of treating minority ethnic groups decently, but could also further improve China's relations with the UK and the United States. He argued that assisting the Jewish refugees would surely increase the international goodwill toward China and gain support from wealthy British and American merchants and bankers in China. As most of the merchants and bankers were Jewish and had close connections with the British and American governments, they had direct influence on both countries' foreign policies for the Far East and China. Furthermore, many Jews were rich and talented, so helping the Jewish refugees would finally create international support for China's economic development.

Sun Ke suggested that: (1) an area of land in the southwestern region near the border be designated for Jews; (2) the central government set up an organizing committee composed of officials from both the central and local governments to be responsible for making arrangements regarding Jewish settlement construction and management; (3) The organizing committee engage Jewish leaders, in China and abroad, to carry out this project; and (4) a registry be established for unemployed Jewish technical specialist to engage them in China's construction projects in the hinterland.

On March 7, the Supreme National Defense Council approved the proposal and forwarded it to the Central Government, requesting the Central Executive Council to discuss this proposal and formulate a detailed implementation plan. The Central Executive Council then forwarded the proposed plan to the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Defense Ministry, the Finance Ministry and the Transportation Ministry, and then to Tsiang Tingfu, director of the political department, for further deliberation. The implementation plan was drafted on April 22 and submitted to the Supreme National Defense Council. The draft implementation plan said:

Jews that have a citizenship must meet the requirements of their own country for immigration. Their immigration procedures and accommodation in China after immigration are subject to valid treaties and conventions. Given that China is bounded by such treaties, government policies and economic conditions and the Jews are restricted by the policies of their homeland, the settlement of Jewish refugees is restricted to a great extent in terms of domestic and diplomatic conditions. Therefore, no special procedures will be necessary for Jews with a citizenship.

*Jews that are stateless should be considered separately, however. As China highly values humanitarianism and our Founding Father held the lofty ideal that all human beings are brothers, we ought to support one another to the greatest extent possible. The Jewish question is complex. Our humanitarian aid to them may still cause international misunderstandings. To the extent domestic and international circumstances allow, we shall follow a 3-part assistance plan for the Jews:*

## **1. Entry Assistance**

*Chinese embassies and consulates may issue special passports to stateless Jews that the League of Nations, emergency relief organizations or major international charities believe are decent and righteous, which shall authorize them to enter Chinese borders. Any eligible Jew shall declare that, after entering Chinese borders: (1) they will abide by Chinese laws and be governed by the Chinese court; and (2) they will not engage in any political or ideological activity, or criticize or conduct any deed against Dr. Sun Yat-Sen's Three Principles. Anyone found disobedient shall be expelled from China.*

## **2. Residence After Immigration**

*After stateless Jews enter Chinese borders, they shall be temporarily accommodated at an international port, and shall not move inland. If they wish to obtain Chinese citizenship, procedures will be followed according to Chinese law. After receiving the Chinese citizenship, they shall enjoy equal rights and no prejudice shall be held against them on the basis of ethnicity or religion.*

## **3. Job Placement Assistance**

*At present, stateless Jews are facing many hardships and so assistance is necessary in terms of employment. China needs a large number of technical specialists, scientists, engineers, doctors and mechanics for our development purpose. The government is responsible for surveying the scope of need for specialists and creating a detailed list clearly indicating the categories of personnel needed and how much they shall be paid. The Foreign Affairs Ministry shall then forward the list to Chinese consulates and embassies, which can then assist in identifying and engaging the above-mentioned specialists. We also request that the League of Nations assist in China's recruitment program. Eligible candidates who can pay their own travel expenses or will receive financial assistance from the League of Nations or international charities shall sign employment contracts with the relevant consulate or embassy on the behalf of the domestic employer. The Central Government is not responsible for finding employment for other Jews that enter China without any employment contract. However, the Central Government may direct the provincial governments to register the unemployed Jews and help them get employed to the greatest extent possible.*

*When this implementation plan is approved, the government shall issue directives to China's representatives at the League of Nations and an official notification to the League of Nations. A public announcement shall also be released in Chongqing. The announcement should be worded in line with this implementation plan.<sup>24</sup>*

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<sup>24</sup>The Second Historical Archives of China: Discussion of Chongqing National government on the of Resettlement of Jewish Refugees, Republican Archives, Vol. 3, 1993, p. 19.

On May 2, the Supreme National Defense Council approved the Central Executive Council's implementation plan but decided not to officially notify the League of Nations. The next day, the Central Executive Council circulated the directive to the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Defense Ministry, the Finance Ministry, the Education Ministry and the Transportation Ministry, and secretly to the local governments.

This plan had received positive responses from Jews worldwide. In July 1939, Jacob Berglas, a famous German Jewish banker, took a special trip to Shanghai to give a press conference at the Sassoon House (now Fairmont Peace Hotel), announcing a tentative plan to transport 100,000 European Jews to Yunnan. He declared that the Chinese central government was actively carrying out the plan and the Yunnan provincial government had made preparations. Jacob Berglas also went to the United States in September to promote the plan and called for donations from American Jews. The Shanghai Zionist Association also expressed support for the plan. Ellis Hayim, leader of the Shanghai Zionist Association, stated that Yunnan would be a new "homeland of hope" for Jewish refugees. The Israel's Messenger and Die Gelbe Post also issued reports on the plan. Due to lack of funding, the plan was not fully implemented in the end. This proposal, however, was a symbol of the Chinese sympathy and generosity to help the Jewish refugees while the host country was suffering and struggling to survive.<sup>25</sup>

### ***6.3.2 Dr. Ho Feng-Shan: The Righteous Chinese Diplomat***

Dr. Ho Feng-Shan, then consul general of the Republic of China in Vienna, saved thousands of Jews by issuing them life-saving visas to China. This is another example of the Chinese sympathy with Jews.

Dr. Ho Feng-Shan was born in Yiyang, Hu'nan Province in 1901. He attended the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and received his doctorate degree in political economics in 1932. From 1938 to 1940, Dr. Ho served as consul general of the Republic of China in Vienna, when the Nazis started the Holocaust in Germany. After the Nazis annexed Austria, more Jews were murdered, or arrested and transported to concentration camps. At that time, the Nazi authorities issued a document announcing that Jews who hold a legitimate visa or other documents to enter other countries could leave Austria immediately. However, many Western countries including the UK and the United States refused to issue them visas by various excuses. In this context, many Austrian Jews turned to the Chinese consulate office in Vienna for help and applied for visas to Shanghai. Dr. Ho was aware that the European refugees could enter Shanghai without visa, but in order to help them leave Austria safely, he issued visas to them nevertheless. The 17-year-old Eric Goldstaub knocked on consulate doors in search of visas to leave, only to be turned down time after time. After 50 attempts, he stumbled upon the Chinese consulate, where Ho extended his

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<sup>25</sup>Wang (2008).

welcome and issued 20 visas. One of the visas saved Eric's family and relatives. Eric's father, who had been arrested on the Kristallnacht, was released a few days afterward because he held a Chinese visa. Later, he went to Shanghai.<sup>26</sup>

The report that Dr. Ho was issuing visas created a buzz in the Jewish community and a big crowd soon queued up in front of the Chinese consulate office to apply for visas. Dr. Ho issued visas as fast as he could. According to Mr. Liu Guanchu, one of Dr. Ho's students, Dr. Ho once said that he had sent a clerk to receive the Jewish applicants in a bar in the alley behind the consulate office, to make the visa application easier. They once issued over a hundred visas one day.<sup>27</sup> Many Jewish refugees still remembered their excitement when they received the visas from Dr. Ho. For them, those were visas for life. Of course, many refugees went to other countries with their Shanghai visas, such as the parents of Israel Singer, secretary general of the World Jewish Congress and Vice-Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council. They fled to Cuba with visas Dr. Ho issued to them. How many visas had Dr. Ho issued to Jewish refugees? The number is never exact, but people say there are "thousands".<sup>28</sup> Mr. Liu Guanchu gave a more precise estimate: according to the receipts of visa fees, Dr. Ho had issued 10,047 visas during his office as consul general in Vienna, most of which had been issued to Jews. Therefore, he could have issued 8000–9000 visas to the Jewish refugees.<sup>29</sup>

It is worth mentioning that Dr. Ho's act of kindness to issue visas to Jews, however, infuriated the Chinese ambassador to Germany, Chen Jie. He thought that would affect the relationship between Germany and China. He sent people to investigate whether Dr. Ho had made profits by issuing visas. But he found nothing against Dr. Ho. Despite the pressure, Dr. Ho continued to issue visas for life to the Jews. Meanwhile, the Nazis were also very angry with Dr. Ho and confiscated the building used by the Chinese Consulate General claiming that it was a Jewish property. After Dr. Ho applied for relocation funds from the Chinese government in vain, he rent an apartment nearby out of his own pocket and continued to issue visas there.<sup>30</sup> He is a good example of the righteous Chinese who hate the evil and are generous to anyone in need. After 1940, Dr. Ho served as ambassador of Republic of China to several countries. He retired in the mid 1950s and settled down in the United States. He died at home in San Francisco in 1997 at the age of 96. What makes him more honorable was that he rarely mentioned his act of kindness while he was alive. It was not until after his death that his righteousness was recognized. Now, Dr. Ho is often hailed as the "Chinese Schindler". In October 2000, the Israeli organization Yad Vashem awarded him the title "Righteous Among the Nations" posthumously. In September 2007, the Israeli government awarded him citizenship of the State of Israel.

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<sup>26</sup>Jiang (2007, p. 35).

<sup>27</sup>Interview with Liu Guanchu, Shanghai, Nov. 23, 2006.

<sup>28</sup>Jiang (2007, p. 37).

<sup>29</sup>Interview with Liu Guanchu.

<sup>30</sup>Jiang (2007, p. 37).

### ***6.3.3 Jews Who Participated in the Anti-fascist Struggle and the Chinese Revolution***

The Jewish refugees in China, especially in Shanghai, had received generous support and assistance from the Chinese people. They also actively participated in the global anti-Fascist movement. After 1933, Jews throughout China organized protests against the Holocaust. They received extensive sympathy from the Chinese people and the international community. They even clashed with Nazis who celebrated their “victory” in Shanghai.<sup>31</sup> After China’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (the War of Resistance) started in July 1937, a number of Jews in China gave courageous support to their Chinese friends and comrades. On October 25, Israel’s Messenger published an article saying: “In the name of humanity and justice, we appeal to the world’s major powers to prevent the arbitrary deprivation of life and property which is taking place in China. The Chinese people are fighting bravely to defend their homeland. We appreciate their heroic deeds. The resistance against the destructive power of terror is admirable. We sincerely hope that the Chinese people will win the war because China’s cause is just and righteous, and they are fighting for their own rights.”<sup>32</sup>

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, some Jews in Japan-occupied regions used their legitimate status to collect information for the Soviet Union and the Allies. In early February 1943, when the Japanese declared the ghetto in Hongkou, the Shanghai Zionist Association organized the Jewish refugees, especially Polish Jews, to boycott Japan’s policy and forced them to make concessions. As mentioned above, there were once underground anti-Fascist publications and flyers that spread the news of the Allies’ victory in the ghetto. Despite there were disagreements concerning whether or not to fight side by side with the British, some Jewish young men who had been trained by the Betar Movement in Shanghai later joined the British army, many of whom fought and died in Myanmar.<sup>33</sup> All this was a strong support and encouragement for the War of Resistance and the anti-Fascist movement around the world.

It is especially worth mentioning that many Jews in China directly joined the military campaigns against Japanese invaders. Some of them spread stories of China’s struggle, especially the army under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. Some joined Chinese troops, including the Eighth Route Army led by the Communist Party of China and the New Fourth Army, fighting bloody battles alongside the Chinese people. After the War of Resistance, some Jews remained in China and participated in the liberation war and the reconstruction program after the founding of the People’s Republic of China. Some of them are still making contributions to the reform, opening up and modernization of China.

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<sup>31</sup>Kamiński and Unterrieder (1986).

<sup>32</sup>Israel’s Messenger, Oct. 25, 1937.

<sup>33</sup>Betar in China 1929–1949 (n.d., p. 88).

The key figures to be mentioned are: Hans Shippe, Ruth Weiss, Jacob Rosenfeld, Richard Frey (original name Richard Stein), Sidney Shapiro, Israel Epstein and Hans Miller.

Hans Shippe: A Jewish writer and journalist, and member of the German Communist Party. He arrived in China in 1925, went to Guangdong in 1926, and headed the International Communication Department of the National Revolutionary Army. After the Great Revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen failed, he fled to Shanghai and wrote a book, "From Guangdong to Shanghai, 1926–1927" which was published in Europe in 1928 and drew a lot of attention. Since then, Hans Shippe has written for the American magazine "Pacific Affairs". In Shanghai, he also organized foreigners to study Marxism and CPC documents and discuss political issues. Later, many leftist Jewish refugees joined this study group (See Chap. 3, Sect. 3.3). Later, Hans Shippe joined the War of Resistance. He called own private friend, Mr. Owen Lattimore, a political adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, insisting that the anti-communist struggle must stop, and that democratic national unity was critical for resistance against Japan.<sup>34</sup> He also went to the frontline to get first-hand information in order to let the outside world understand the War of Resistance. In the fall of 1938, he visited the New Fourth Army base in southern Jiangxi as a journalist. He met the troop commanders including Ye Ting, Xiang Ying, Zhou Zikun and Yuan Guoping. He then published many articles introducing the New Fourth Army.<sup>35</sup> In October 1941, Hans Shippe visited the Shandong base and was warmly welcomed. At the welcoming banquet, representatives of the Communist Party of China, the Eighth Route Army, Shandong Anti-Japanese Democratic Government and representatives from all walks of life in Shanghai expressed their appreciation of his heroic spirit and brave deeds. Meanwhile, they pledged to win the final victory to realize the good wishes from the international community. Xinhua News Agency reported on this event, introducing Hans Shippe as a famous journalist and a comrade of Chinese revolutionists. He had visited China six times and published many articles about China. He was engaged by the Institute of the Pacific Relations to collect the heroic cases of the Chinese people in the war.<sup>36</sup> One month later, Hans Shippe died in a battle in Yi'nan County, Shandong Province. He was still holding a steel gun when he was found dead. To remember Hans Shippe and his dedication to the War of Resistance, a monument put up in his honor where an inscription says: This man came from Europe with the spirit of internationalism and fell in Yi'meng in a battle against the Japanese invaders.<sup>37</sup>

Ruth Weiss: An Austrian Jewish journalist. Ruth Weiss was born to a Jewish family in Vienna on December 11, 1908. She graduated from the University of Vienna with a Ph.D. in 1932. She had great interest in the Chinese culture when she was still a university student. After graduation, she decided to visit China for some time and had planned to write travel stories for newspapers. After arriving in Shanghai on October 2, 1933, Ruth Weiss wrote several articles introducing the situation of

<sup>34</sup>Dazhong daily, July 7, 1942.

<sup>35</sup>Huang and Zhang (1992).

<sup>36</sup>Jiefang Daily, Oct. 7, 1941.

<sup>37</sup>Wang (1979).

China and had them published in Vienna. However, she was met with a protest from Japanese Consulate in Vienna as she condemned the Japanese invasion. Therefore, she stopped writing and became a teacher at a Jewish school in Shanghai. Meanwhile, she made a further investigation into China. During this period, she met with Rewi Alley and Agnes Smedley and they introduced her to Madam Soong Ching-Ling, Lu Xun and other Chinese and foreign progressives, which deepened her understanding of the Chinese society. Later, she became an assistance of Agnes Smedley in her activism in China. She interpreted for Agnes Smedley's secret meetings with leaders of Chinese Red Army. During the "December 9th Movement", she was assigned by Agnes Smedley to report the petition activities in Shanghai. She also joined the study group organized by Hans Shippe which helped her better understand Chinese issues. After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July 1937, Ruth Weiss left Shanghai for Chengdu and joined the just cause of resisting Japanese invasion and liberating China. She helped her American friend publish a newspaper Chengdu Express, which aimed to inform the Chinese public of the progress of the war reported by foreign radio stations. She joined the wartime service brigade to console and take care of the wounded Chinese soldiers. She worked as a consultant in a War of Resistance service team established by students from five universities and helped the Chinese Defense League led by Madam Soong Ching-Ling in uniting the nation against Japanese invaders. In September 1939, when the Nazis in Germany invaded Poland and the Second World War broke out, Ruth Weiss' parents as well as millions of Jews were transported to concentration camps and a great number of them died there. Out of her hatred for the Nazis and her love for China, she applied for Chinese citizenship in the same year.<sup>38</sup> After 1949, Ruth Weiss stayed in China and continued to work for China until she passed away. On April 25, 2009, Ruth Weiss' tombstone was unveiled in the Honorary Chairman Soong Ching-Ling Mausoleum in Shanghai.<sup>39</sup>

Jacob Rosenfeld: An Austrian Jew, born in Lemberg in January 1903. He was admitted to the prestigious University of Vienna to major in urology in 1922. He graduated with a Ph.D. in May 1928. After graduation, he became a resident doctor at Vienna General Hospital. Hitler rose to power in 1933, anti-Semitism surged in Nazi Germany and spread to Austria. In February 1934, conflicts broke out in Austria and Jacob Rosenfeld was arrested as he was a member of the Social Democratic Party of Austria. After his release from jail, he left Vienna General Hospital and opened a urology clinic. In March 1938 after Germany invaded and annexed Austria, Rosenfeld, who was both a Jew and Social Democratic, was arrested again and deported to the Dachau concentration camp. He was released one year later but he was ordered to leave Austria within two weeks. The latest research results show that he had obtained a visa from Dr. Ho Feng-shan.<sup>40</sup> In August 1939, Jacob Rosenfeld came to Shanghai and opened a clinic, gynecology and obstetrics urology in the French Concession. He settled down in Shanghai and led a comfortable life. Later, he met Hans Shippe and joined his political study group. There Jacob Rosenfeld

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<sup>38</sup> Ye (1993).

<sup>39</sup> Liberation Daily, April 26, 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Rosenfeld's niece, Vivian Rosenfeld, Washington, US, May 21, 2008.

learned about and was deeply moved by the heroic deeds of armed forces under the leadership of the Communist Party of China in the War of Resistance. He told Hans Shippe once and again that he wanted to join the New Fourth Army and use his medical skills to help the army and the people who were fighting against the Japanese invaders. After rigorous inspection, he finally joined the New Fourth Army in Yancheng, northern Jiangsu Province, as a consultant for the Ministry of Health. Jianghuai Daily run by the Communist Party of China reported his story, introducing him as the first foreigner who had joined the New Fourth Army. He not only treated soldiers and civilians but also trained a large number of medical personnel for the troops.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, he earned very high esteem in the New Fourth Army. In 1942, he became a special member of the Communist Party of China. In April 1943, in order to treat General Luo Ronghuan who suffered from kidney disease, Jacob Rosenfeld transferred to the anti-Japanese base in Shandong. In Shandong, Jacob Rosenfeld both treated Luo Shenghuan and other comrades and trained medical personnel. He went to the front to rescue the wounded soldiers and treated civilian patients as well. He became a household name in that area. After victory of the War of Resistance, Jacob Rosenfeld was sent to northeast China, as the medical head of the Northeast Field Army's First Column. No foreigner had even assumed such a high position in the Chinese army. Later, Jacob Rosenfeld wrote down his personal experiences and delivered lectures to reveal the atrocities of Nazi Germany and Japan and praise the gallant soldiers and civilians who fought against Japan under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. He wrote in one of his articles, "Nazi concentration camps are jails for a nation,"<sup>42</sup> while "northeast China enjoys free and fresh air. The Communist Party of China will surely lead China towards a modern country."<sup>43</sup> In 1949, Jacob Rosenfeld went to Austria and Israel to visit his relatives and he died in Israel in 1952. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Israel, every Chinese delegation to Israel would visit Jacob Rosenfeld's tomb near Tel Aviv and pay their tribute to him. In Shandong Province, a hospital has been built in his name. Research on Jacob Rosenfeld and remembrance activities in his honor will be detailed below.

Richard Frey: An Austrian Jew born to a middle-class family in Vienna in February 1920. In 1934, he joined the Scouting movement and served as a paramedic. In order to grasp more medical knowledge, he took various medical training classes and even attended lessons in a medical university privately. Finally, he became a doctor. After Nazi Germany annexed Austria in 1938, Austrian communists, revolutionaries and Jews became targets of cruel persecution and were forced to flee Austria. Richard Frey had to bid farewell to his parents and his friends and fled to Shanghai among so many Jewish refugees. He arrived with only five Reich marks in his pocket on January 15, 1939. At first, he had to temporarily live in a reception center set up by the Jewish charity in Hongkou as he could not connect with underground Communist Party of China. He sought for means to connect with and join the Eight Route Army

<sup>41</sup>Jianghuai Daily, March 25, 1941.

<sup>42</sup>Rosenfeld (1944a).

<sup>43</sup>Rosenfeld (1944b).

while working for a hospital for infectious diseases. In March 1939, Richard Frey went to Tianjin. He first worked for a hospital established by an Austrian doctor and later was transferred to the Mackenzie Memorial Hospital. During this period, he continued to look for the Communist Army and finally got in touch with comrades from the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei anti-Japanese Base. In the autumn of 1941, he arrived in the West Peking Base under the escort of an ERA secret liaison man and there he met General Xiao Ke. Two weeks later, he was escorted to the central area of Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei anti-Japanese Base where General Nie Rongzhen extended warm welcome to him. General Nie kindly gave him a Chinese name “Fu Lai” and arranged him to be a teacher at Bethune Health School. Even in the hardest wartime, Richard Frey always had worked with great energy and enthusiasm. From 1942 to 1944 when the Chinese army resisted the Japanese “mopping-up” campaign twice, Richard Frey not only taught leprosy in the Bethune Health School, but also actively participated in the rescue work and medical service for the army together with his students. He was very serious with his teaching work. In order to overcome the language barrier, he managed to learn Chinese. Later, he was transferred to Yan'an to teach leprosy and internal medicine at China Medical University in 1944 and at that time he was already able to speak fluent Chinese. Under extremely difficult conditions, Richard Frey built a laboratory to produce crude penicillin, which met some urgent medicine needs, he was warmly received by Chairman Mao and other Chinese top leaders, and joined the Communist Party of China.<sup>44</sup> After 1949, Richard Frey remained in China and served at the national committee of CPPCC.

Sydney Shapiro: Born to a Jewish family in New York in 1914. He had been a practicing lawyer before the outbreak of World War II. At first, he traveled to China just to make a living. Later, he met and married Fengzi, a progressive writer and actress, and under her influence, he joined the Chinese revolution. During the War of Liberation (1945–1949), in order to deliver drugs to the liberated areas and the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, he used his identity of an American lawyer as a cover to deal with KMT agents. At that time, Shanghai was full of “white horror”, but he still successfully completed his tasks.<sup>45</sup> His office on Fuzhou Road in Shanghai was once the point of contact for underground CPC organizations and progressives. Underground Communists and progressive youth often came to his office after midnight, closed the curtains, and sat around a small radio he had brought from the United States to receive the latest news from Yan'an.<sup>46</sup> In early 1949, in order to celebrate the liberation of Beijing, he often practiced singing revolutionary songs together with Mao Dun, Yang Hansheng and some others all night. On October 1, 1949, he was invited to the founding ceremony as a guest of honor. After the People’s Republic of China was founded, Sydney Shapiro served as an English language expert in China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration. He translated a large number of Chinese literary classics such as *Outlaws of the Marsh*, *Family*, and *Tracks in the Snowy Forest*, and introduced Chinese culture to the world. In 1983, Shapiro

<sup>44</sup>Feng and Li (1991).

<sup>45</sup>People’s Daily Overseas Edition, Nov. 27, 1999.

<sup>46</sup>People’s Daily Overseas Edition, Nov. 27, 1999.

was elected as a member of the national committee of CPPCC. He also began to participate in the discussion of state affairs. In his autobiography *My China*, Shapiro described that he just played a “tiny part in advancing the biggest social revolution in Chinese history.”<sup>47</sup>

Israel Epstein: Born to a Jewish family in Poland in 1915, moved to China with his parents in early childhood and grew up in Tianjin. After 1931, he became a reporter and editor for the Peking and Tientsin Times. In 1933, he met Edgar Snow and was deeply influenced by Edgar’s progressive thoughts and his book “Red Star Over China”. Therefore, he began to actively engage in China’s democratic movement and revolution. He was once an editor of the English magazine Democracy founded by Edgar Snow. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance, Israel Epstein’s parents went to the United States, but he stayed in China alone and fought side by side with the Chinese people. In 1938, he joined the China Defense League and directly assisted its top leaders Madam Soong Ching-Ling and Liao Chengzhi. Later, he went to Hong Kong to work at its headquarters where he edited the English China Defense League Newsletter. His first book, *The People’s War*, was published during this period and this book praised the Chinese people for their unbending resistance against the Japanese aggression. He also translated important documents of the CPC’s Central Committee and the important works of CPC leaders (including Mao Zedong’s “On the Protracted War”) into English.<sup>48</sup> After the Pearl Harbor attack in December 1941, Israel Epstein was arrested in Hong Kong by the Japanese and jailed in a concentration camp. Not long later, together with some British and American friends, Israel Epstein escaped from the concentration camp and went to Chongqing where he worked as a correspondent for the Allied Labor News of the United States. In 1944, he visited Yan'an for the first time and met Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De and other leaders of the Communist Party of China. He saw the future and hope of China there. After World War II, he went to the United States as editor-in-chief of the Allied Labor News, but he returned to China in 1951. Afterwards, he participated in the preparation for publishing “China Reconstruct” at the invitation of Madam Soong Ching-Ling and later served as the executive editor of the magazine. In 1957, he was granted Chinese citizenship. In 1964, he joined the Communist Party of China. After 1979, he served as editor-in-chief of *China Reconstruct* and member of China Welfare Institute and China Soong Ching-Ling Foundation. He was also elected as standing member of the national committee of the CPPCC. He once told his friends: “I have spent all my life in China except for 10 years. I am lucky to witness the great changes in China.”<sup>49</sup> On his 70th, 80th and 90th birthdays in 1985, 1995 and 2005, Chinese leaders Deng

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<sup>47</sup> Shapiro (1998).

<sup>48</sup> Xiao (1995). About Epstein’s experience in China, see *A Memoir of More than 80 years in China*, New World Press, 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Xiao Jiang, Epstein: from the Concentration Camp to Yan'an and *A Memoir of More than 80 years in China*.

Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao visited him to give him their best wishes. He passed away not long after his 90th birthday in 2005.<sup>50</sup>

Hans Muller: Born in 1915 to an ordinary Jewish family in Düsseldorf, Germany. After Hitler came to power in 1933, Hans Muller, who had just graduated from high school, was forced to enter the Reich Labor Service set up by the Nazis. Later, he couldn't bear the horrible coercion there and escaped. Amid the escalating anti-Semitic atrocities, it was very difficult for Jewish students to enter the university in Germany, so Hans Muller went to Switzerland with the help of his father's friend and studied medicine at the University of Basel. He met a Chinese student Chiang Zhaoxian and learned about China's culture and history, the Chinese people's ongoing resistance against Japanese aggression and the revolution led by the Communist Party of China. Since then, he had wanted to go to China to join the Chinese people in the fight against aggressors and suppressors. In 1938, Hans Muller's parents were taken to the concentration camp, and anti-Semitism also rose in Switzerland under the influence of the Nazis. Very soon, Hans Muller finished his thesis, obtained his doctorate degree, and left Switzerland for China immediately to realize his dream. In September, he made his way to Yan'an and was warmly welcomed by the local people. Chairman Mao Zedong met with him and treated him to a dinner.<sup>51</sup> Late that year, he went to the battle front in the Taihang Mountains. Since then, he had served as a doctor at the International Peace Hospital in southeast Shanxi and held medical posts in the Eighth Route Army. He cured countless soldiers and civilians and was widely admired by his comrades. After 1943, he served as chief physician of the International Peace Hospital in Yan'an and trained lots of medical professionals for the Eighth Route Army. He made great contributions to China's victory of the War of Resistance. After the victory, he was given an opportunity to go back to his homeland to visit his relatives.<sup>52</sup> However, as the China's War of Liberation (1945–1949) broke out, Hans Muller gave up the opportunity without hesitation. Very soon, he went to work as director of the General Field Hospital of the Ji-Re-Liao Military Region. In 1949, just before the founding of the People's Republic of China, he married Kyoko Nakamura, a Japanese nurse who also worked for the People's Liberation Army. In 1950, he was granted Chinese citizenship and 6 years later, he joined the Communist Party of China. In the following decades, he had remained dedicated to medical services. He once worked as vice president of Beijing Medical University and concurrently served as consultant of the International Department of the Central People's Broadcasting Station and German editor of the Foreign Languages Press. He was elected member of the CPPCC and actively engaged in China's reform and development.

Here it's necessary to mention also a group of doctors that had fought in the international brigades during the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939 and came to China later and joined the Chinese army in the War of Resistance. As Israel Epstein

<sup>50</sup>Xiao Jiang, Epstein: from the Concentration Camp to Yan'an and A Memoir of More than 80 years in China.

<sup>51</sup>Feng Caizhang & Li Baoding, the Medical Team of the Communist Party of China, p. 658.

<sup>52</sup>Feng Caizhang & Li Baoding, the Medical Team of the Communist Party of China, p. 658.

recalled, "That was a group of around 20 people, all from Central and Eastern Europe, and more than half were Jews."<sup>53</sup> The leader, Stanislaw Flato, was a Polish Jew. He once treated Dong Biwu and Deng Yingchao and other comrades of the CPC. He was nicknamed "Hua Tuo Flato" by Dong Biwu because of his superior medical expertise. He was also a close friend of Zhou Enlai. After 1957, he served as chief advisor at the Polish Embassy in Beijing.<sup>54</sup> The deputy leader was Janto Kaneti, a Bulgarian Jew. After coming to China, he worked for the Red Cross and saved many Chinese soldiers and civilians in Guizhou, Hunan and Yunnan Provinces where battles of resistance took place. He met with Zhou Enlai three times. Later, he married Zhang Sunfen who graduated from the Nursing Department of Yenching University. Janto Kaneti brought his wife back to Bulgaria after World War II and revisited China many times after 1949.<sup>55</sup> One of the doctors Fritz Jensen was a Jewish doctor and writer from Austria. He also participated in China's War of Resistance. After 1949, he remained in China and published an influential book *China Siegt*. In April 1955, he went to Jakarta, Indonesia, to attend the first Asia-Afro Bandung Conference as a correspondent but unluckily he died in Kashmir Princess Incident.<sup>56</sup> There are many other touching stories involving the group of doctors and its Jewish members. The Chinese people will always be grateful for what they have done and never forget their names.

There are many other Jews like the group of doctors who had helped the Chinese people in the War of Resistance and the Liberation War. Those we must mention include: Morris "Two-Gun" Cohen, who once served as the aide-de-camp to Dr. Sun Yat-Sen and an active comrade in the War of Resistance. During the war, he played an important role in the Nationalist government's foreign liaison and arms procurement. After 1949, he maintained a good relationship with the Chinese government and made regular visits to China at the invitation of Madam Soong Qing-Ling.<sup>57</sup> Frank Theyleg, as mentioned above, a Jewish engineer who came to China as a refugee. The Japanese authorities once forced him to help with the production of grenades and other weapons, he instructed instead the Chinese workers to reduce the size of the leads so that the produced grenades could not explode. That was an indirect but still important contribution to the War of Resistance.<sup>58</sup> Wilhelm Mainzer, a German Jew who joined the Chinese army during the War of Resistance and later ranked as a senior medical officer. After the war ended, he married a Chinese nurse and the couple immigrated to Israel.<sup>59</sup> Hans Konig, a German Jew who worked for the Soviet TASS News Agency Shanghai Branch. He actively reported to the outside world what happened in the War of Resistance. Later, he became the first DDR Ambassador to China. J. Ben Eliezer, the leader of Shanghai Revisionist Zionism,

<sup>53</sup>Pan (2005a).

<sup>54</sup>Wang (2005).

<sup>55</sup>Zhang (2007) and Wang (2005).

<sup>56</sup>Zhang and Fritz (2000), Zhang (2007) and Wang (2005).

<sup>57</sup>Levy (1997).

<sup>58</sup>Pan et al. (1995, p. 150).

<sup>59</sup>Pan (2005b, p. 94).

also risked her life to transmit intelligence for the CPC in Chongqing. Therefore, she was repeatedly interrogated by the Japanese Kempeitai.<sup>60</sup> Sidney Rittenberg, American Jew who came to China in 1945 and actively devoted himself to the liberation and the reconstruction of China.<sup>61</sup> Gertrude Rosenberg, Hans Shippe's widow and a close comrade-in-arms of Madam Soong Ching-Ling. She continued to make important contributions to China's revolution and construction after the death of Hans Shippe.<sup>62</sup> Manya Reiss, one of the founders of the American Communist Party. He also worked in China for many years and was highly praised for his work at the Xinhua News Agency.<sup>63</sup> S. Ginsbourg and others who stayed in China after 1949 and played noteworthy roles in China's construction and development. The above Jews in China made great contributions to the liberation of the Chinese people. They will always be remembered by the Chinese nation.

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<sup>60</sup>Pan (2005b, pp. 65–77).

<sup>61</sup>Rittenberg et al. (2006).

<sup>62</sup>Pan (2005a).

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## Chapter 7

# Departure of Jews and End of the Jewish Refugee Community in China



After WW II, Jewish refugees left China for various reasons. By the start of the Cultural Revolution, except for Hong Kong and Taiwan, the Jewish refugee community and settlements in China had ceased to exist. However, during the 17 years before the Cultural Revolution, many Jews still lived in China and their organization, the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai, remained effective with the support of the Chinese government. At the same time, the Jews who left China and settled in various parts of the world formed a special “community” in the name of “China Jews”, which indicated their strong emotional bond with China. It should be noted that as Jews gradually left China in the period covered in this chapter, it is not appropriate to refer to them as “Jews in China”. For the purpose of this chapter, the term “Jews in China” shall be replaced by “China Jews”. “China Jews” is not an accurate description and it’s only used for the convenience of narration hereinafter.

## 7.1 Jews Leaving China After the End of World War II

Western writings tend to deliberately emphasize that the ideological factor had led to the departure of Jewish refugees from China in the early post-War period, claiming that Jews had left China because they were afraid of the new Communist regime. This claim is biased or incomplete. It lacks case-by-case analysis and even worse has serious prejudices against China’s domestic development. In fact, the reasons why the European Jewish refugees, the Sephardi Jews and the Russian Jews left China vary, and even within each group, individuals left at different times for different reasons.

### ***7.1.1 Departure of the European Jewish Refugees***

After World War II, the European Jewish refugees were the first to leave. They were grateful to Shanghai as the city had offered them a refuge from Nazi persecution. However, they had regarded Shanghai only as a temporary refuge and had not intended to settle in Shanghai. As soon as the war was over, they set out to find a new homeland. In addition, most of them had families and relatives who remained in Europe or had fled to other parts of the world and they had lost contact with each other during the war. Therefore, once the war was over, they were eager to seek out and reunite with their loved ones. That's why they left Shanghai in a hurry. There were some European Jewish refugees who had arrived in Tianjin and Harbin via Shanghai or elsewhere, and they also left China in the early post-war period for the same reason.

It's hard to figure out the exact and complete number of European Jewish refugees who left Shanghai after the war. However, a survey of documents shows that about 3000–4000 Jews left Shanghai in 1946, about 8000–9000 in 1947, about 5000 in 1948, about 5000–6000 in 1949, about 2000 in 1950, and about 2000 in 1951.<sup>1</sup> To sum up, from 1946 to 1951, the total number of Jews leaving Shanghai was about 25,000–28,000, most of which were European Jewish refugees. It is estimated that hundreds of European Jewish refugees left China from Tianjin and Harbin.

Most European Jewish refugees mainly left for the United States, Canada, Australia and Israel, while some went to South Africa and Latin America and only a few returned to Europe. It's recorded that the largest group of Jewish refugees returning to Germany were 295 left-wingers and their families. They arrived in Berlin on August 21, 1947, including the active members of the underground anti-Nazi group mentioned before: Gunter Nobel who later became a political leader of East Germany, and Hans Konig who was the first DDR ambassador to China. The Socialist Unity Party of DDR also recognized Hans Konig as party members when they worked for the Soviet TASS News Agency.<sup>2</sup> On August 21, 1997, they gathered in Berlin to mark their 50th anniversary of returning from Shanghai to Berlin. The author of this book was also invited to the event and gave a speech. More details will be given below. It is estimated that no more than 1000 China Jews had returned to Germany, Austria and other European countries. It's worth mentioning that some China Jews who had immigrated to the United States, Canada, Australia and Israel and other countries returned to Germany, Austria and other European countries when they got old, because those countries were their homelands and already free from anti-Semitism. It is obvious that the idea of homeland is deeply embedded in the Jewish culture.

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<sup>1</sup>These figures are based on a variety of data, mainly based on the following sources: Former Tokeyer and other books, "The Fugu Plan", formerly cited by Krantzler, "Shanghai Jewish Refugee Community 1938–1945", former Dick Book "Wanderers and settlers in the Far East, a century in which Jews lived in China and Japan," a report on Chinese Jews published in February 1949 by the Jewish Affairs Institute of the World Jewish Congress.

<sup>2</sup>It's recorded by author when he interviewed Gunter Nobel in Berlin on August 21, 1997.

The above facts clearly prove that the departure of European Jewish refugees from China (Shanghai) was not directly related to China's internal political situation; it was more because of their own needs for homeland and reunion. Certainly, the unrest during China's liberation war might have impacted their departure, but it was not the key factor for most of them.

### 7.1.2 *Departure of the Russian Jews*

When it comes to the departure of the Russian Jews, it is necessary to trace back history a bit. In the 1930s, due to the worsening political situation, especially the Japanese invasion and the establishment of Manchukuo, thousands of Russians including Jews had gone back to the Soviet Union from Harbin. Unexpectedly, however, the Soviet Union escalated the cleansing of criminals who had allegedly engaged in espionage for Germany and Japan since 1937. As a result, many Harbin Jews were arrested and some of them were executed.<sup>3</sup> After the Pearl Harbor Attack, the Japanese army occupied Shanghai Concessions and Hong Kong, so the Russian Jews remaining in China were subject to the Japan rule. However, compared with the "stateless" European Jewish refugees who had fled to Shanghai and the Sephardi Jews who were regarded as enemy aliens by Japan, the Russian Jews were much luckier because of their Russian citizenship. Japan and the Soviet Union signed the "Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact" in April 1941, just eight months before the Pearl Harbor Attack. The Pact stipulates that both Contracting Parties undertake to maintain peaceful and friendly relations between them and mutually respect the territorial integrity and inviolability of the other Contracting Party; Should one of the Contracting Parties become the object of hostilities on the part of one or several third powers, the other Contracting Party will observe neutrality throughout the duration of the conflict.<sup>4</sup> After the Great Patriotic War started in June 1941, the Neutrality Pact kept the Soviet Union safe from the joint attack by Nazi Germany and Japan. Similarly, after it declared war on the United Kingdom and the United States in December 1941, Japan also hoped to use the Neutrality Pact to prevent the Soviet Union from entering the war against Japan. Therefore, it tried everything to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Such an international situation was good for the Russian Jews under the rule of Japan in Shanghai. Some Russian Jews managed to obtain Soviet passports and thus became immigrants from a neutral country; those who were still applying for Soviet passports were also entitled to protection of the Soviet Union. Later, all Russian Jews were protected as the immigrants from a neutral country. Therefore, the Russian Jews were generally free to move, work, go to school and do business, and enjoyed special privileges in areas controlled by Japan and its puppet state Manchukuo. In Shanghai for example, after the Japanese army occupied the foreign concessions, some Sephardi Jewish businessmen were forced

<sup>3</sup>See Moustafine (2002).

<sup>4</sup>Li and Jin (1994).

to transfer their property and assets to the Russian Jews. The Russian Jews in north China had similar benefits. The Russian Jews there, under the cover of their identity as immigrants from a neutral country, were able to continue their business. Meanwhile, they carefully maintained friendly relationships with the Japanese authorities and avoided any involvement in political disputes. Manchukuo was regarded as an independent country by the Japanese, so the situation in northeast China was special for Russian Jews. They lived a more stable life and had a closer relationship with the upper classes of Japanese and were able to play a unique role in aiding and relieving Jewish refugees from Shanghai. For example, the Harbin Jewish Community managed to dissuade the Japanese authorities from implementing the Meisinger Plan. Generally speaking, however, most Russian Jews had not colluded with the Japanese authorities.

It is precisely because of the special historical background that, before the end of the war, the Russian Jews in China had enjoyed a much better life than the European Jewish refugees and the Sephardi Jews. Most Russian Jews would like to settle in China, and some even wanted to play a prominent part in the reconstruction of China. However, the outbreak of Chinese civil war in 1946 shattered their dreams. Therefore, some Russian Jews, especially those who were affluent, followed the European Jewish refugees and left for North America, Australia and some other countries. In 1948, the relationship between the KMT government and the Soviet Union deteriorated sharply, so some Russian Jews with Soviet passports were forced to leave. However, only a few went back to the Soviet Union while the majority moved to other countries. In December 1948, the newly established State of Israel sent Moshe Yuval as representative of the Immigration Department to Shanghai to issue visas to Jewish immigrants. At the same time, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem also actively helped Jews in China book steamer tickets and air tickets to Israel. In early 1949, Moshe Yuval left Shanghai, and Isador Magid took the position of the honorary consul of Israel in Shanghai until 1951. After 1951, Dr. Abish held the post for a short period.<sup>5</sup> As Isador Magid recalled, although China and Israel had not established formal diplomatic ties, the Chinese government and relevant authorities in Shanghai did not deter their efforts.<sup>6</sup> It is estimated that they issued more than 7000 Israeli passports and visas to Israel and about 4000–5000 Shanghai Jews went to Israel.<sup>7</sup> Most of them were Russian Jews and European Jewish refugees, and a few were Sephardi Jews.

The Russian Jews in the former Manchukuo had a very special experience. On April 5, 1945, the Soviet Union renounced the “Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact”. Since then, many Russian Jews had lost the privilege and cover of their identity as immigrants from a neutral country and were put under close watch. On August 8, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and millions of Soviet soldiers broke into northeast China. The Japanese troops who felt they were doomed began to slaughter Soviet citizens, including Russian Jews with Soviet passports. For example, in Hailar,

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<sup>5</sup> Goldstein (2006).

<sup>6</sup> Goldstein (2006).

<sup>7</sup> Ofer (1990).

the Japanese Kempeitai arrested 18 overseas Soviet citizens on August 9, including 12 Jews and all of them were killed.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, most Russian Jews welcomed the Soviet troops. However, after the Soviet troops occupied some major cities in northeast China, they arrested some Russian Jewish leaders and charged them of colluding with the Japanese. For example, A. Kaufman, leader of the Harbin Jewish Community, was arrested and taken to the Soviet Union on charges of anti-Soviet collusion with the Japanese and engagement in espionage and Zionist activities. These unexpected changes led to the departure of some Russian Jews from northeast China. However, the Communist Party of China soon prevailed over KMT in northeast China, and Harbin and Dalian and other major cities were first liberated. Therefore, later, the deadly civil war and the deteriorating relationship between the KMT government and the Soviet Union had less impact on the Russian Jews in northeast China. Many Russian Jews with Soviet passports took this opportunity to open businesses and some even became highly respected “Soviet experts.”

Overall, although some Russian Jews left China for various reasons in the post-war years, most Russian Jews had remained in China when the People’s Republic of China was founded in October 1949. When the War of Resistance ended in August 1945, there were about 2000 Russian Jews in Harbin. In August 1949, there were still 1600 Russian Jews there, with only 20% Russian Jews gone.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, by October 1949, most of the Russian Jews in Shanghai had remained.

### 7.1.3 *Departure of Sephardi Jewish Merchants*

The Sephardi Jewish merchants’ withdrawal from China was a long story to tell. There were indeed many political and ideological factors.

In 1931, after the Mukden Incident (the September 18 Incident), the Japanese army occupied Northeast China and began to step into North China. Sephardi Jewish merchants’ business almost halted in the Northeast and North China but they could still run business in the East and North China. In 1937, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident marked the outbreak of the War of Resistance. After the Battle of Shanghai, the Japanese army occupied Shanghai, isolating the Shanghai International Settlement from the outside world. Trade in Shanghai, both domestic and international, was seriously affected. Sephardi merchants in Shanghai suffered significant losses. According to statistics of the British Chamber of Commerce Shanghai released in October 1938, British merchants had lost about 5–6 million pounds within a year, and British investment in China had dropped more than 120 million pounds.<sup>10</sup> Sephardi merchants in Shanghai bore a big part of the loss. To get out of the plight, Sephardi merchants began to leave Shanghai. For example, the E. D. Sassoon and Company Limited (the Sassoon Company) sold a large stake in its subsidiaries and other com-

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<sup>8</sup>Wei (1992).

<sup>9</sup>Goldstein (2000).

<sup>10</sup>Friedman (1940).

panies as well as real estate properties. It is estimated that more than 10 million US dollars had been withdrawn.<sup>11</sup> After the Pacific War broke out on December 8, 1941, the Japanese army occupied the International Settlement and soon occupied Hong Kong, causing Sephardi merchants in Shanghai and Hongkong to suffer the hugest loss in history, as has been mentioned in Chap. 4.

After World War II, Sephardi merchants were once major buyers of businesses and material stock left by the Japanese, and attempted to make a comeback in Shanghai, but soon they gave up the plan and withdrew again. It was mainly because: First, the UK and the United States signed treaties with China during the World War II to transfer the control of the International Settlements to the Republic of China and relinquish their extraterritoriality and all other privileges, so the British Jews lost all the preferential conditions they had enjoyed before the war. As Victor Sassoon admitted: "The days are gone when we can run any large-scale business in China. In the future, foreigners cannot make the call ... companies will be run by Chinese rather than foreigners."<sup>12</sup> Second, the Chinese civil war broke out shortly after the War of Resistance. The security situation worsened, so did the economic situation. The KMT government became shaky and it became increasingly clear that a new government would take over the country, which made it impossible for the Sephardi merchants, who were British, to restart business in China.

After 1946, the Sephardi merchants began to transfer their property out of Shanghai and shifted their business focus to Hong Kong. The Sassoon Company relocated all its direct subsidiaries from Shanghai to Hong Kong, converted its cash into Hong Kong dollars, and only ran branches in Shanghai. As the backbone business of the Sassoon Company, the E. D. Sassoon Banking Company Limited moved its headquarters to Nassau of the Bahamas and began to sell real estate properties and stocks. Lawrence Kadoorie, the eldest son of Sir Elly Kadoorie, reduced the portfolio of the family's businesses in Shanghai and transferred its core businesses to Hong Kong. In 1948, Sephardi merchants retreated in full swing, sold all their assets in Shanghai and eventually left Shanghai, which had been hailed as a heaven for adventurers. By the early 1950s, Sephardi merchants had stopped all their activities in mainland China, and most of their assets in China had been transferred to Hong Kong, as a result of which the Hong Kong Jewish community suddenly boomed. The Jewish merchants had come from Hong Kong to Shanghai and then returned to Hong Kong a century later, completing a historical cycle.

It is obvious, therefore, that the ideological factor played a certain part in the Sephardi merchants' retreat from mainland China, but the key reason rests with the loss of policy incentives or the previous favorable economic environment. In fact, a government consistently following the same ideology may still adopt different policies for Jewish merchants once again gathered and prospered in mainland China after China started its reform and opening-up cause.

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<sup>11</sup>Zhang Zhongli & Chen Zengnian, the E.D. Sassoon & Co., in China, People's Publishing House, p. 153.

<sup>12</sup>Report by the Central News Agency in Mumbai on Sep. 21, 1945.

## 7.2 Jews and the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai Before the Cultural Revolution

### 7.2.1 *Departure of Jews and the Jewish Communities in China Before the Cultural Revolution*

There are no exact statistics of how many Jews were in China in 1949. Based on available documents and records, the highest estimate was between about 9000–10,000, and the lowest was 5000–6000. Most of them were Russian Jews having the Soviet citizenship.

In the next decade, they gradually left China for mainly six reasons. First, a small number of Jewish refugees who were left behind in China gradually moved to their new homeland or reunited with their families, except for a few Jewish refugees who did not leave until the early 1960s. Second, the Cold War had intensified. Especially after the outbreak of the Korean War, there was strong confrontation between China and the Western countries. So some Jews who had prejudice against socialism or communism left China. Third, China issued a series of economic policies to accelerate transition to socialism, especially the transformation of private businesses, which made it increasingly difficult for foreigners to do business in China. In this context, the remaining Sephardi merchants who took a wait-and-see attitude and almost all Russian Jews were forced to leave China. Fourth, the Sino-Soviet relationship turned sour after 1960, which was another cause for some Russian Jews with Soviet citizenship to leave. Fifth, the domestic economic situation had deteriorated during the “Three Years of Natural Disasters” and the living conditions in China were harsh, which forced some other Jews to leave. Finally, the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966, forcing the rest of foreigners including Jews in China to leave.

With the departure of Jews in China, the previous Jewish communities and settlements in Harbin, Tianjin, Shanghai and other cities gradually shrank. By the end of 1953, there were only 453 members in Harbin. In 1954 and 1955, a large number of Soviet Jews returned to their homeland. By the end of 1955, the number of Jews in Harbin dwindled to below 100.<sup>13</sup> By 1960, there was only one synagogue in Harbin which still organized activities, but there was no rabbi to preside over religious services. Later, as that synagogue closed down, the history of the Jewish community in Harbin came to an end. In late 1946, when THA registered with the Social Affairs Bureau, the total Jewish population in Tianjin was around 1600.<sup>14</sup> Over the next decade, Jews gradually left Tianjin. By January 1958, there were only 32 Jews in Tianjin.<sup>15</sup> At this point, THA had lost its ground for existence. In September 1957, THA began to clean up its property and held public auctions to sell goods that were no longer needed. The scriptures of the Tianjin synagogue were taken

<sup>13</sup> Committee of Heilongjiang Chronicles (1993).

<sup>14</sup> Tianjin Municipal Archives, Records of Jewish Religious Community (Fonds Num. 25, Category Num. 2, Catalogue Num. 2, Folder Num. 3726).

<sup>15</sup> Wang (2007).

to Israel, and some documents were given to SJCA.<sup>16</sup> That year, the authorities in Tianjin approved the application to close the THA and announced its closure on Jewish newspapers. The clean-up was finished in January 1958, formally ending the history of THA which had existed for half a century.<sup>17</sup> In the early 1960s, the last Jews in Tianjin left. Since then, no Jew or Jewish descendant could be found in the household registration books of Tianjin. At the same time, SJCA also shrank, and it ceased to exist when the Cultural Revolution began. While detailed information will come later, it should be mentioned here that while the Jewish communities of Harbin, Tianjin and Shanghai shrank and finally disappeared, the Jewish settlements in Manchuria, Hailar, Qiqihar, Shenyang, Dalian and Qingdao also ceased to exist before the Cultural Revolution.

It must also be noted that anti-Semitism has never occurred in China although almost all Jews left China. The Chinese government and people have always been friendly with China Jews. They helped them immigrate to any country as they wished, helped resolve issues they left behind and safeguarded the legitimate rights of Jews still living in China. All China's efforts are well recognized and fully reflected in the activities of the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai, the main organization of China Jews after 1949.

### ***7.2.2 Activities of the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai (1949–1967)***

After the liberation of Shanghai, the majority of Jews who remained in Shanghai were Russian Jews, while there were a few Sephardi Jews and Central European Jewish refugees. On June 1, 1949, they established the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai (CJCS) and registered with the Foreign Affairs Department of the Shanghai Military Control Committee on September 1, 1950. CJCS was initially mandated to coordinate activities of Jews in Shanghai and help them with their immigration affairs. In 1951, CJCS took over the responsibilities of JD's Shanghai office, while JDC offered financial assistance to CJCS. At the same time, as many Jews left China, some Jewish organizations, including SZA and SAJCA, closed their offices in Shanghai. Since August 1953, SZA and SAJCA transferred some of their functions to CJCS. Since August 1953, SZA and SAJCA transferred some of their functions to CJCS.

CJCS's work mainly included education and health care, immigration affairs, welfare and relief, religious and cultural activities, and providing certification documents.

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<sup>16</sup>Speech of Leora Shluger Forman, Monica Morris Schwartz, *The Russian Jews of Tientsin, China, 1900–1950*.

<sup>17</sup>Speech of Leora Shluger Forman, Monica Morris Schwartz, *The Russian Jews of Tientsin, China, 1900–1950*.

### 7.2.2.1 Education and Medical Services

Soon after Shanghai's liberation, many Jewish families left Shanghai and the number of Jewish students dwindled, so the Jewish schools were gradually closed. In this context, to address the education needs of Jewish children in Shanghai, CJCS ran an elementary class and a Hebrew class open to all students. Their tuition and the drop-off and pick-up service were all covered by CJCS.

In terms of health service, before the CJCS, the "Medical Trust Fund" set up with proceeds from selling the Shanghai Jewish Hospital financed the basic medical services for Jews living in poverty. The Fund's governing board consisted of three members, recommended by CJCS, SAJCA and SZA respectively. In January 1956, the Fund terminated and the remaining assets of approximately \$14,000 were transferred to CJCS. The medical expenses paid by the Fund on behalf of the poor Jews in Shanghai amounted to over \$8000 a year.

### 7.2.2.2 Immigration

Another service of CJCS was to help Jews still living in Shanghai, Harbin, Tianjin, Dalian, Qingdao and some other parts of China move overseas. CJCS helped China Jews apply for immigration permits and visas via various Jewish communities, the Israeli government and the UNHCR. Meanwhile, it also covered their expenses to complete relevant procedures as well as their travel expenses in China. According to statistics available, with the help of CJCS, 364 China Jews left in 1952, in which 99 went to Israel. In 1953, 301 Jews (including 161 Shanghai Jews) left, in which 201 went to Israel. 85 left in the first half of 1954. In 1955, 169 Jews (including 69 Shanghai Jews) left, in which 49 went to Israel and 87 went to the Soviet Union. In the first half of 1956, 114 (including 44 Shanghai Jews) left, in which 82 went to Israel. Their immigration cost per person was \$47 in 1952, \$35 in 1953, \$31 in 1954, \$41 in 1955, and \$76 in the first half of 1956.<sup>18</sup>

Another job CJCS had done in facilitating immigration was to look for receiving countries for the sick and elderly Jews left behind in China, with the help of JDC and HICEM. Finally, 21 were permitted to immigrate to Switzerland in the first half of 1954, and 2 went to Ireland. In 1955, CJCS found nursing homes for most of the remaining sick and elderly Jews in Israel and some other countries, and they left China gradually. After the majority of China Jews left, and especially after the Jewish Agency for Israel lifted the age and economy restrictions on immigration of Jews to Israel in 1955, CJCS ceased to handle immigration affairs and handed the job over to the W. J. Citrin office in Hong Kong on June 31, 1956. W. J. Citrin was an honorary immigration officer of the State of Israel and representative of JDC in the Far East.

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<sup>18</sup>Council of the Jewish Community Shanghai, Report, July 1953–June 1954, p. 3. July 1955–July 1956, pp. 9–12.

### 7.2.2.3 Welfare and Relief

Before 1956, SZA was responsible for the welfare and relief of the remaining Sephardi Jews in Shanghai, while CJSC's Shanghai Hebrew Relief Society and Shelter House were responsible for the welfare of Russian Jews and other Jews. In October 1953, Shanghai Hebrew Relief Society merged with the Shelter House. After July 1, 1956, SZA handed over its welfare and relief responsibility for Sephardi Jews to CJCS. Thus, CJSC became primarily responsible for the welfare and relief of all Shanghai Jews. The main relief efforts were: cash assistance, free meals, charity institutions such as the Shelter House and nursing homes, and healthcare allowance. According to statistic, cash assistance, the Shelter House and free meals from 1952 to the first half of 1959 amounted to<sup>19</sup>:

Year	Cash assistance (US dollars)	Shelter house and free meals (US dollars)
1952	10,850.00	7930.00
1953	9704.00	9155.00
1954	7062.00	7730.00
1955	8979.00	8937.00
1956	18,234.30	8476.00
1957	17,347.92	6099.80
1958	15,767.26	5430.20
The first half of 1959	7814.80	2754.60

Moreover, CJCS also provided subsidies and relief for Jews in Harbin, Tianjin, Dalian and even a handful of Jewish families scattered in Anhui and Xinjiang. For the first half of 1956, subsidies given to the THA amounted to 4100 RMB yuan per month. From July 1958 to June 1959, although few Jews remained in Tianjin, the total amount of relief from CJCS to Tianjin Jews reached 15,400 RMB yuan.<sup>20</sup>

### 7.2.2.4 Religion and Culture

In the first years after 1949, the Sephardi Jewish community and the Russian Jewish community still held their own religious services independently. In 1951, SZA leased out the Shanghai Jewish School and the Ohel Rachel Synagogue. Since then, the religious activities of the Sephardi Jews transferred the Russian Jews' New Synagogue on Route Tenant de la Tour (now South Xiangyang Road). As more and

<sup>19</sup>Council of The Jewish Community Shanghai, Report, July 1955–June 1956, p. 4. July 1, 1958–June 30, 1959, pp. 2–3.

<sup>20</sup>Council of The Jewish Community Shanghai, Report, July 1955–June 1956, p. 5, July 1, 1958–June 31, 1959, pp. 14–15.

more Jews left Shanghai, participants in religious services decreased. In order to cut expenses, in August 1953, SZA reorganized: its religious affairs were handed to the CJCS Religious Affairs Subcommittee (the Subcommittee), which consisted of representatives of both Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews, while SZA was responsible for half of the funding for religious services. The Subcommittee held morning and night worships every day, baked and distributed religious foods such as Matzoth. Considering the sharp drop of the Shanghai Jewish population, in July 1956, CJCS sold the New Synagogue and set up a chapel at the Shanghai Jewish Center rebuilt by the Shelter House. At the same time, CJCS also donated the Hebrew Bible and some other scriptures and religious books formerly kept at the New Synagogue to the Israeli government.

The Jewish Club was still responsible for the cultural activities of Jews in Shanghai, mainly including youth performances for the Hanukkah and Purim, sometimes classical music solo at the small auditorium, which were very popular among the Shanghai Jews. On December 31, 1955, with the closure of the Jewish Club, more than 3000 books were given to the Israeli Ministry of Culture. The rest of the library's collection was transferred to the Shanghai Jewish Center open to the local Jews. Youth performances for the Hanukkah and the Purim continued there as usual.

Around 1949, there were 4 Jewish cemeteries in Shanghai: the Baikal Road (now Huimin Road) Cemetery, the Point Road (now Zhoujiazui Road Cemetery, Mohawk Road (now North Huangpi Road) Cemetery and the Columbia Road (now Panyu Road) Cemetery, which were jointly managed by SZA and SAJCA. In 1958, Shanghai Municipal People's Government informed CJCS that, in view of health and municipal administration, cemeteries in the city center must be relocated to a new site in the suburbs. CJCS assisted the Government in relocating the Jewish cemeteries. In the same year, the Jewish Cemetery in Tianjin was also relocated to the suburbs with the direction and help of the local government.<sup>21</sup>

At the same time, CJCS also paid attention to the religious life of Jews in other places of China. For example, the annual report of CJCS (July 1, 1958 to June 30, 1959) mentioned the relocation of the Harbin Jewish Cemetery with the support of the local government as well as other religious activities of Jews in Harbin.<sup>22</sup>

### 7.2.2.5 Issuing Certificates

The certification documents CJCS provided mainly referred to Ghetto Letters and proof of death issued to the Central European Jews living in the Hongkou Ghetto from 1943 to 1945, so that they and their families could reclaim their properties or seek for compensation from the German, Austrian and other governments. CJCS had got the complete personal files and records from the JDC of nearly 20,000 Central European Jewish refugees who came to Shanghai to escape the Nazi persecution.

<sup>21</sup>Speech of Leora Shluger Forman, Monica Morris Schwartz, The Russian Jews of Tientsin, China, 1900–1950.

<sup>22</sup>Council of the Jewish Community Shanghai, Report, July 1, 1958–June 30, 1959, pp. 16–17.

From July 1958 to July 1959, the CJCS issued 401 Ghetto Letters (including 287 to Germany), and 386 death certificates (including 218 to Germany), as well as 29 other certificates.<sup>23</sup>

The work of CJCS had always been supported by the Jewish organizations of the world and the Israeli government. For example, JDC had continued to provide financial assistance to CJCS, and helped Shanghai Jews with their immigration in collaboration with HICEM. W. J. Citrin, Israel's Honorary Consul in Hong Kong, had kept in touch with CJCS. The Jewish community of Hong Kong had also played a role in their relationship. Horace Kadoorie, honorary financial officer of the JDC Hong Kong office, was responsible for the money issues between JDC and CJCS.

It should be noted that the Chinese national government, the Shanghai Municipal Government and all relevant departments had given CJCS consistent support. The government was concerned with the Jews still living in Shanghai and other places of China, and offered them subsidies as needed. In 1956, in a talk with David Marshall, Singapore's Chief Minister and Ambassador to France, Premier Zhou Enlai learned that some Jews in China still faced with policy obstacles in moving to other countries.<sup>24</sup> He immediately demanded relevant government authorities to assist Jews in completing the departure procedures, so that they could move to their new homelands as soon as possible. Under the persuasion of China, the Soviet Union changed its policy and agreed to accept Jews from China.<sup>25</sup> In 1952, Shanghai lifted the freeze on the Palamt fund<sup>26</sup> of \$400,000, allowing CJCS to use the fund. In the early years after 1949, the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Grain provided high-standard flour for CJCS at discount prices for Jews to make religious foods such as Matzoth, while food supply was very tight at that time. Supporting CJCS's relief for poor Jews in Shanghai, the Land and House Control Bureau of Shanghai offered a 50% premium when it bought the New Synagogue on Route Tenant de la Tour. After 1955, Shanghai Municipal Government also cut the property tax payable by Jews and the Jewish community. CJCS was grateful to China for the help, repeatedly mentioning in its annual report that all government officials who had worked with CJCS and other Jewish organizations were kind and sympathetic.

It is estimated that about 2000 Jews registered with CJCS in 1950 and 1951. In 1952, the number was 600–700.<sup>27</sup> At the end of June 1954, there were 310 Jews registered with CJCS. At the end of June 1956, there were 171 Jews in Shanghai, including 87 Soviet citizens who were 40.86 years old on average and 84 other Jews who were 46.98 years old on average and of whom 10 had obtained visas and got ready for immigration. On June 30, 1958, there were only 84 Jews in Shanghai. When THA announced its closure, Jews in Dalian, Shenyang and Qingdao had all left. In mid 1959, as CJCS documents show, there were only 251 Jews in China, all living in Shanghai, Tianjin, and Harbin, including 72 in Shanghai, 26 in Tianjin and 153 in

<sup>23</sup>Council of the Jewish Community Shanghai, Report, July 1, 1958–June 30, 1959, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup>Chan (2001), Joan (2008).

<sup>25</sup>Chan (2001).

<sup>26</sup>This refers to a fund owned by the Palestinian Jewish Office in China at that time.

<sup>27</sup>Dicker (1962).

Harbin.<sup>28</sup> In 1966, when the Cultural Revolution began, all Jews had left, and CJCS completely ceased to function. There were no more than 10 Jews in Shanghai.

Only a couple of lonely and aged Jews and Chinese-Jewish descendants still lived in Shanghai and Harbin. For instance, the Russian Jew Leiwi Imas fled to Northeast China across Siberia, and finally settled in Hongkou during World War II. He married a Chinese girl from Jiangsu when he was above 50, and then had a son Isgar and a daughter Sara. Isgar unfortunately got meningitis complicated with polio when he was 3 and became permanently disabled. Leiwi often took his children to CJCS for dinner and the Ohel Rachel Synagogue for religious activities. After 1949, the family not only received a monthly allowance of 300 Hong Kong dollars from JDC, but also special subsidies from the Chinese government. In the early 1960s, when the living standard in China was 13 RMB yuan per month, their subsidies from the Chinese government were as high as 69 RMB yuan per month. After Leiwi died of a stroke in 1962, Isgar and Sara still received assistance from CJCS and the Chinese government. Isgar also began to deal in aquarium products and fruits. In 1992, Isgar married Pan Taoying, also a Chinese girl from Jiangsu. A few years later, she gave birth to a son, Ivan. Sara moved to Israel, and became the first Jewish immigrant from China to Israel after the two countries established diplomatic relations.<sup>29</sup> On June 30, 2007, the author of this book met with Ellen M. Heller, former chair of JDC in Shanghai, and was told that JDC was still giving money to three Jews or their descendants in Shanghai.<sup>30</sup> She showed three names, including Isgar Imas and two others who had never been heard of before. In this sense, the Jewish community in Shanghai had unknown legacies although it had stopped functioning. As a literature survey shows, a Jew named Hanna Agre still lived in Harbin in 1985.<sup>31</sup>

Overall, before the Cultural Revolution, the Jewish communities had all ceased to operate in the mainland China, but there were still active Jewish communities in the greater China, such as the Jewish community in Hong Kong and some Jews forming smaller societies in Taiwan and Macao. For a long time, even during the Cultural Revolution, the active communities had played an important role in connecting China with the global Jewish community.

<sup>28</sup>Council of the Jewish Community Shanghai, Report, July 1953–June 1954, p. 14. July 1955–June 1956, p. 5. July 1, 1958–June 30, 1959, p. 19.

<sup>29</sup>Xinmin Evening News, Feb. 9, 1998.

<sup>30</sup>Communication log between Pan Guang and Judge Ellen M. Heller, the former Chair of JDC, Shanghai, June 30, 2007.

<sup>31</sup>Eber (1992).

## Annex: Return of Former Jewish Refugees and Their Descendants to Their ‘Homes’ After Reform and Opening Up

### Pan Guang and Wang Jian

Since the late 1970s, there have been three waves of Jews revisiting China. The first wave occurred in the 1980s. At that time, China was reopening its door to the outside world and undergoing unprecedented changes, which drew many Jews back to China. Some visited their old friends, some stayed in China and got employment, some started businesses and some others just came for sightseeing purpose. However, the number of Jews who stayed and worked in China was small, and even fewer invested in businesses here. The second wave occurred in the mid 1990s. In 1992, China and Israel established official diplomatic relations and then quite a lot of Israeli officials, entrepreneurs, scholars and tourists came to China. Following them, Jews from all over the world again not only turned their eyes on China but also made their presence in China. Israelites surged as a proportion of the Jews revisiting China. In the 21st century, the number of Jews coming to China skyrocketed for two main reasons. The first was China’s rapid economic development. China further integrated into the international economic system after accession to the WTO, creating a favorable environment for Jews to do business and invest in China. Secondly, international terrorism spread after the 9/11 Attack. In comparison China was a much safer, more stable and prosperous place than many other parts of the world for Jews.

### *China Jews Leading the Return to China*

After China began its reform and opening up cause, especially after the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel, more and more former Jewish refugees in China and their descendants came back to China to relive their memories and visit their friends. That formed a new wave of Jewish coming to China and composed new chapter of the friendship between Jews and Chinese people. The author of this book has collected many beautiful stories about their friendship.

In 1979, W. Michael Blumenthal, then the United States Secretary of the Treasury, made an official visit to China. He took a trip to Hongkou during a break to visit his home and recall his life in the wartime with his neighbors. He told the accompanying journalists that, compared with 1939 when he fled from Germany to Shanghai at the age of thirteen, big changes had occurred, and most notably there were no more beggars or dead bodies on the street.<sup>32</sup> In the following years, Michael came back to Shanghai regularly. The author of this book escorted him many times to his old home on the second floor of 59 Chushan Road. His eyes were filled with tears

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<sup>32</sup>The Washington Post, March 4, 1977; Time, March 12, 1979.

whenever he recalled the hard times of his family when the family of four squeezed in a room of 10 square meters. In 1989, Yosef Tekoah, president of Israel's Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, visited Shanghai. He said at a banquet: "Youth was the very best time of life and I spent it in Shanghai. Now I am back here to recollect the good old times."<sup>33</sup> In 1996, the 91-year-old former Israeli Minister of Religions Zerach Warhaftig returned to Shanghai and looked for the old home of Meir Ashkenazi where he used to live.<sup>34</sup> In 1994, T. Kaufman, president of the Israel-China Friendship Association, returned to Harbin, as head of a delegation. He found his old home where he spent his childhood and went to the well-preserved Harbin Jewish Cemetery. There were still over 600 tombstones.<sup>35</sup> In August 2005, Baron Robert Skidelsky, member of the British House of Lords, returned to his birth city, Harbin, and made a special trip to the Jewish cemetery. Robert Skidelsky was born to a wealthy merchant family in Harbin.<sup>36</sup> Since 1994, Israeli industrialist S. Muller has returned to his birth city Tianjin many times and met with his former neighbors.<sup>37</sup> In 1984, K. Gunpo, founder of the Shanghai Doumer Theatre (now Donghu Cinema), revisited the theatre with his wife, meeting with some former staff and taking a group photo with them.<sup>38</sup> Benjamin Fishoff, a New York businessman and a former Jewish refugee, revisited Shanghai with his whole family in 1994. In the showroom of the Ohel Moshe Synagogue in Hongkou, he was excited to see a copy of his ID card which he used 50 years ago.<sup>39</sup> Eve Kramer, born to a Russian Jewish family in Shanghai, returned to her old home in Shanghai in 1994 and found that the "Mezzuzah" (the traditional Jewish door ornament) was still hanging above the door of the room where she was born. Her father had nailed it on the door frame 50 years ago.<sup>40</sup> The list of stories goes on and on.

Descendants of some China Jews also came to their "hometown" recurring in their dreams. The parents of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert were born in Harbin, and his grandfather rested in the Harbin Jewish Cemetery. In June 2004, during his first visit to China, Ehud Olmert went to the Shanghai Ghetto and then went to Harbin to pay tribute to the deceased. He had also brought more than 200 entrepreneurs to China and promoted China-Israel economic and trade cooperation.<sup>41</sup> His elder brother, Amram Olmert, gave up an opportunity of working in the US and instead he became the minister-counselor on science and agriculture of the Israeli embassy in China. He also did a lot of job to promote China-Israel agricultural cooperation. During his office in China, Amram went to Harbin to visit the cemetery of his

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<sup>33</sup>Pan (2005).

<sup>34</sup>The author also went to the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai with him.

<sup>35</sup>Qu and Li (2006, p. 150).

<sup>36</sup>Qu and Li (2006, pp. 186–187).

<sup>37</sup>Song (2007).

<sup>38</sup>Office of Shanghai Film Chronicles (1994).

<sup>39</sup>Pan (2005, p. 107).

<sup>40</sup>Pan (2005, p. 105).

<sup>41</sup>Pan (2006).

grandfather many times.<sup>42</sup> In September 1998, Dr. Sam Rehnborg, president of the Nutrilite Health Institute of Amway Corporation of the United States, brought his two children to Shanghai to visit the place where his father Carl Rehnborg once worked and lived. Carl Rehnborg came to Shanghai in 1915 and first worked as an agent for Sanhua Milk Company on North Suzhou Road. Later, he learned some prescription methods of traditional Chinese medicine and gradually became interested in nutrition. After going to the United States, based on his knowledge of TCM prescription, Carl Rehnborg developed DOUBLE X, the world's first dietary supplement containing vitamins and minerals, and then founded Nutrilite. Carl Rehnborg never realized his dream of revisiting Shanghai but his son made the dream come true. Sam said with excitement: "My father found the secret of making nutritious foods in Shanghai; 70 years later, I finally brought it back to where it came from and fulfilled my father's wish."<sup>43</sup> Danish Jew Vilhelm Meyer, general manager of Shanghai Anderson Meyers & Co., Ltd, had lived in China for many years. After many years of painstaking document survey and research, his grandson C. B. Bramsen published "Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China" in 1993, which has been translated into Chinese.<sup>44</sup> On September 1, 1995, C. B. Bramsen became Denmark's new ambassador to China and presented his credentials to President Jiang Zemin. President Jiang told C. B. Bramsen that he knew the Bramsen family was rooted in Shanghai, and he still remembered the Anderson Meyers & Co., Ltd. C. B. Bramsen was very excited to hear this.<sup>45</sup>

Some Jewish industrialists who used to live in China and some of the descendants of China Jews also came back to China to invest, do business and exchange. They shared with the outside world of the achievements China had made and built a bridge for China to expand foreign trade and strengthen economic relations, contributing to China's modernization. Former Jewish refugee Shaul Esienberg was committed to the development of Shanghai and invested in Shanghai Yaohua Pilkington Glass Group. He signed the contract to set up a Diamond Exchange in Pudong just three days before his death. About the Diamond Exchange, he said: "I selected Shanghai because the city has a very friendly relationship with Israel and helped many Jews during World War II and I am one of them."<sup>46</sup> After his death, his family continued this project. Shanghai Diamond Exchange was finally established in October 2000. As of 2004, the trading volume reached 368 million US dollars.<sup>47</sup> Baron Lawrence Kadoorie gave a strong support to the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant project. On February 6, 1994, Generation Unit 1 started commercial operation. At the celebration ceremony, Premier Li Peng particularly praised Lawrence Kadoorie as a "pioneer from Hong Kong".<sup>48</sup> Recently, Michael Kadoorie, son of Sir Lawrence Kadoorie, has

<sup>42</sup>The Chinese CCTV website [www.cctv.com](http://www.cctv.com), Jan. 5, 2007.

<sup>43</sup>Shanghai Times, Sept. 29, 1998.

<sup>44</sup>Bramsen (1998).

<sup>45</sup>Ibid, p. 111.

<sup>46</sup>Xinmin Evening News, March 27, 1997.

<sup>47</sup>Liberation Daily, Feb. 22, 2005.

<sup>48</sup>People's Daily, Feb. 7, 1994.

visited China many times and established an office in Shanghai. Dr. Sam Rehnborg mentioned above introduced Nutrilite, the most competitive health product in the world, to China in 1998. Since then, Nutrilite grew rapidly and has become the best-selling health product brand in China.<sup>49</sup> Amway, a direct sales arm of Nutrilite Health Institute, has also grown its sales rapidly. In 2003, its sales revenues in China reached 1.75 billion yuan in 2005, exceeding the United States and Japan. It is worth mentioning that Amway has played an active role in getting China into the WTO and sponsored many charity, education, cultural and social activities in China.<sup>50</sup> Starr Group, which used to be very active in China, gradually withdrew from the Chinese market in the 1950s. However, after China started its reform and opening up program, it became the first foreign insurance company to “return” to the Chinese market. Starr Group is now actively engaged in multiple areas in Shanghai and China. It established AIA Shanghai office which has become a leading insurance policy seller here.

### ***China Jews Driving Global Jewish Enthusiasm in China***

The “homecoming” waves of China Jews and their descendants also brought many powerful Jews to China to seek development opportunities. Edgar Bronfman, the richest Jewish Canadian and chairman of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), has visited China many times. He has not only invested in a beverage factory in Shanghai, but also participated in the West China development strategy. Morris Greenberg, the highest leader of Starr Group and CEO of American International Group (AIG), has not only invested in China, but also served as chairman of Mayor of Shanghai’s International Business Leaders Advisory Council (IBLAC) several times. He contributed a lot of good proposals and was granted the Magnolia Award and Shanghai Honorary Citizenship. Investment companies with Jewish background such as Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Salomon Brothers are also expanding their presence in China. Recently, Rothschild & Co also started to invest in premium winery in China.

The enthusiasm in China has gradually come to cover other areas such as culture and sports. The Jewish violinist Isaac Stern visited China in 1979, which stirred up a fashion of classical music in China. A number of talented kids who attended his performances and lectures have become famous musicians.<sup>51</sup> News Corp., founded by the Jewish tycoon Keith Rupert Murdoch, has invested more than \$2 billion in China in the past decade. Its entertainment channel has entered the cable TV network of Guangdong Province, becoming the first foreign channel in mainland. CCTV’s English Channel (CGTN) is aired on Fox News website in the United States, thanks to News Corp. In October 2003, K. R. Murdoch was invited to speak at the Party School of the CPCCC. He was the first foreign media tycoon to give a speech there.

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<sup>49</sup>International Financial News, Oct. 20, 2004.

<sup>50</sup>See the website of Amway (China): [www.amway.com.cn](http://www.amway.com.cn).

<sup>51</sup>New York Times, Jul. 5, 2009.

In October 2004, the NBA President David Stern (Jewish) led an NBA delegation to Shanghai and immediately went to Jewish sites including Hongkou Ghetto where Jewish refugees lived during World War II. After the visit, he said: “This city makes me feel warm.”<sup>52</sup> With his help, NBA basketball games have come to Shanghai, Yao Ming’s hometown, which strongly promoted basketball in China. Robert Lawrence Kuhn, author of “The Man Who Changed China: The Life And Legacy of Jiang Zemin”, is one of the American Jews who cherish a strong passion for China. He is an international investment banker, a corporate strategist, a host for the American Public Broadcasting Corporation, and executive director of Citigroup. Through his long-term research and close observation, he formed a very unique insight into China’s development: China’s economic growth is only the second biggest change, as the real biggest change in China has occurred to people’s awareness, their views, their confidence in the country and people, their enthusiasm in world affairs, as well as their personal freedom they enjoyed in real life. His new book “The Inside Story of China’s 30-Year Reform” has been published recently, which depicts the changes in China from the perspective of an American. For the book, he had interviewed many provincial and ministerial officials and the interviews have been disclosed to the world for the first time in this book.<sup>53</sup>

In the 21st century, the global Jewish enthusiasm in China driven by China Jews is getting more stable and rational, and now it has shown a strong and sustained driving force. In 2004, a study by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute in Jerusalem proposed that China’s development would impact the future of Jewish civilization. As the most globalized ethnic group, Jews should recognize and value China’s development and the great opportunities it offers. Jewish decision-makers must develop a pan-Jewish strategy for China and Jewish-Chinese partnership would have far-reaching positive effects on the global community.<sup>54</sup> This “China Opportunity Outlook” is shared by a large number of Jewish elites and provides an ideological basis for the participation of Jews in China’s reform and development process. In this sense, the Jewish participation in China’s development is a conscious action and this concludes the mission of China Jews.

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<sup>52</sup>Liberation Daily, Oct. 15, 2004.

<sup>53</sup>Chen (2009).

<sup>54</sup>Wald (2004).

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## **Part II**

# **A Theoretical Perspective on Jewish Refugees and the Sino-Jewish Relationship**

This part presents an in-depth study of Jewish refugees in China and the relations between Jews and Chinese from the theoretical perspective. It mainly reviews the international context for Jews to take refuge in China, the push–pull model and the motives of Jewish refugees fleeing to China, the Diaspora theory and the Jewish refugee communities in China, the collective memory of Jewish refugees in China and the China Complex, the survival of Jewish refugees and the development of study on Jewish refugees in China since the mid-twentieth century.

# Chapter 8

## The International Background: The Impact of the Holocaust on Jews



Tens of thousands of Jewish refugees fled to China as a direct result of being persecuted, deported and murdered by the Nazi (The Holocaust). Therefore, a research on Jewish refugees in China requires a look at the bigger picture, mainly the Holocaust and its far-reaching impact on the Jewish people and Jewish civilization. “The Holocaust” in this study means the mass murder of Jews by the Nazis in Germany and other Nazi-occupied countries.

Anti-Semitic ideology and campaigns first appeared in the 3rd century BCE for a complexity of reasons concerning religion, politics, economy, culture and society. The Middle Ages saw the systematic emergence of anti-Semitism theories and organized campaigns in Europe. In modern times, waves of anti-Semitism swept across Russia and Eastern Europe, making the Jews “not only subjected to economic and political oppression as a nation without authority but also deprived of their fundamental civil rights<sup>1</sup>”. However, all previous anti-Semitic campaigns were dwarfed by the Nazi genocide.

Although more than 70 years have passed after this tragic massacre, it remains an unforgettable history for many including not only the victims and their relatives, but also the surviving perpetrators; so it is for politicians and officials who are in dispute over the legacy issues, and especially for those who try to expose the mysteries of the history. This chapter explores the impact of the tragedy on the Jewish people and Jewish civilization.

### 8.1 Propaganda Before the Holocaust

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, anti-Semitism escalated in Russia and Eastern Europe again, and it also gained a foothold in Western Europe. In this wave of anti-Semitism, a prominent feature was that Jews were framed. For example,

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<sup>1</sup>Lenin (1905).

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,<sup>2</sup> a fabricated anti-Semitic text, was published and used by anti-Semites as propaganda against Jews. After this document was published, a series of large-scale pogroms against Jews took place and shocked the world, such as the 1903 Pogrom of Kishinev and the 1905 Pogrom of Odessa. Until the First World War, anti-Semitic violence spread in Russia and Eastern Europe. Even in Western Europe, there were vicious incidents of framing Jewish officer. In the Dreyfus case in December 1894, Capt. French Dreyfus, a Jewish man, was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of false accusation.<sup>3</sup>

The growth of anti-Semitism in Europe slowed down during World War I, but it gained momentum as soon as the war ended. In Poland, the government issued anti-Semitic economic policies, which was an important cause of the Fourth Aliyah.<sup>4</sup> In Romania, there were organizations and campaigns that openly called for deportation of Jews. In Lithuania and Latvia, the tendency to undermine the Jewish influence in the economic and cultural spheres increased and received government support. In the Soviet Russia, the situation of Jews had improved in the early days after the revolution as anti-Semitism was declared illegal. All Jews were given equal rights, and some Jews became political leaders. However, as the class struggle expanded and a number of Jewish leaders such as Leon Trotsky, Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev were labelled as counter-revolutionists, anti-Semitism revived, threatening millions of Jews.

Anti-Semitism in the 1920s not only followed the racial discrimination and religious prejudices championed by the traditional anti-Semitism theory, but also took on some new features. The most prominent one was the combination of anti-Semitism and anti-communism.

After the October Revolution of 1917 and the European revolution that followed, a large number of Jewish elites who accepted Marxism became revolutionary leaders. In the early days after the revolution, 16 out of the 24 top leaders of the communist party and government of the Soviet Russia were Jews, the top leader of the Communist Party of Germany Rosa Luxemburg was a Jew, and the leader of the Hungarian Soviet Republic Béla Kun was also a Jew. Some anti-communist scholars seized this opportunity and coined the term “Jewish-Bolshevism”, trying to combine the anti-Semitic tradition of Christian Europe with anti-communist sentiments. Similarly, some anti-Semitic theorists found that bourgeoisie’s fear of communism could be used to fuel the anti-Semitic movement. As a result, anti-Semitic writings such as The Protocols of the Elders of Zion were translated into multiple languages and disseminated internationally in the early 20th century. Jewish-born revolutionaries including Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lassalle and Leon Trotsky were alleged to be Jewish conspirators under the guise of communism.

It was inevitable that the anti-Semitic movement in the 1920s played into the hands of right-wing extremists for its anti-communism and finally joined forces with the

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<sup>2</sup> An antisemitic fabricated text purporting to describe a Jewish plan for global domination.

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Dreyfus, a French Jewish army captain, was sentenced to life imprisonment for false accusation in December 1894.

<sup>4</sup> Aliyah is the return of Jews to Palestine.

emerging fascism. Adolf Hitler, a former corporal born in Austria, blended the anti-communist, anti-Semitism, racist and fascist ideas and produced a systematic fascist anti-Jewish theory. Hitler once claimed that the human race had reached a “critical moment” and that free capitalism had begun to disintegrate as “Jewish-Bolshevism” was planning to take over Europe and even the whole world. The Aryans, as a “master race”, must eliminate Jews and their Marxism through a “permanent revolution” to seek more “Lebensraum”, or living space. If Hitler had been a second rate writer, his books like My Struggle would at best attract only a few ignorant adolescents and would not have influenced the sane people. Tragically, however, he did not make his claims out of bravado; he held a true desire to put his crazy theories into practice. Even worse, he actually captured the German power by leveraging anti-communism and anti-Semitism, turning Germany into the first fascist country where the Jews had enjoyed peace and affluence since the Enlightenment movement.

## 8.2 Development Process of the Holocaust

Adolf Hitler rose to power in early 1933, and started the crazy anti-Semitic movement very soon. The twelve years from 1933 to 1945 witnessed the madness intensifying by three phases.

Phase I (1933–1938): Issuing a series of anti-Semitic decrees to carry out persecutions on German Jews in political, economic and cultural fields In April 1933, Nazi Germany enacted the first anti-Semitic law, the Law on Restoring Public Officers, under which “civil servants who were not of Aryan descent must retire.” Accordingly, Jews were evicted from government agencies. In the same month, the “Twelve Principles of College Students” were announced, one of which was: “Our most dangerous opponents are Jews.” Since then, Jewish students had met with a difficult situation on campus. In October, the State Press Law was promulgated, demanding that all editors must be Aryans and must not even have Jewish spouses. This law drove Jews to leave the press and publishing departments again. In the autumn of 1935, the Nuremberg Laws were introduced, depriving Jews of German citizenship and all political rights, and banning marriage between Jews and Germans.

At the same time, the German government and the Nazis systematically incited innocent people to boycott and attack businesses, stores, law firms and other institutions owned by Jews, assaulting and even killing Jews. Paul Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister of Propaganda of Nazi Germany, organized a large-scale book burning campaign in Berlin and then other places in Europe, Including books written by Jewish and other un-Germanic authors, such as communists. Many world cultural celebrities such as Heine, Picasso, Mendelssohn, Cézanne and others were banned. Even scientific masters like Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud were forced to flee their homeland.

In 1936, the anti-Semitic surge abated briefly during the Berlin Olympics. It came back and even escalated as soon as the Olympics ended. The assassination of the German diplomat Ernst Vom Rath by Herschel Grynszpan, a German-born

Polish Jew, in Paris on Nov. 7, 1938, offered Nazi Germany an excuse for more crazy violence against the Jews. In particular, on Nov. 9 and 10, 1938, synagogues were burned and Jewish shops were smashed throughout Germany. Countless Jews were killed or wounded in this riot, while more than 20,000 Jews were transported to concentration camps. Therefore, the night of Nov. 9, 1938 became known as the Night of Broken Glass or the Crystal Night, as thousands of shop windows were broken that day. In history books, the Kristallnacht became a synonym to the Holocaust later. The Nazi authorities promulgated a series of decrees demanding that Jews must wear yellow badges on their clothes in public, Jewish passports must be marked with the letter "J", and Jewish doctors' permits were revoked. German Jews had basically lost their right to survive.

Phase II (1938–1941): Extending anti-Semitic decrees to the annexed countries and implementing action plans to deport and segregate Jews From March 1938 to May 1941, Nazi Germany invaded and annexed Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Romania, Greece, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. As a result, the anti-Semitic movement extended to the annexed territories where the puppet authorities notoriously joined the bloody movement. For example, the Vichy administration of France cooperated with Nazi Germany by drafting a draconian anti-Semitic law and persecuting French Jews. The Norwegian Quisling regime followed Nazi Germany and conducted a crazy anti-Semitic surge in Norway as well.

It is worth mentioning that during this period the Nazis began to implement action plans for the deportation and segregation of Jews. Millions of Jews in Poland were transported to ghettos where they were treated inhumanly. About 500,000 Jews in Warsaw were driven into a restricted area of only 2.71 km<sup>2</sup>, and thousands of them died of hunger and cold there. In Vienna, the Nazi Germany established the "Jewish Migration Office" which was responsible for driving Austrian Jews out of the country and looting all their assets before they left. From March 1938 to September 1939, as many as 100,000 Austrian Jews went bankrupt in exchange for exit permits. In Berlin, the organization that undertook the same mission was called the "Jewish Exit Central Office". From 1933 to 1939, more than 280,000 Jews were forced to leave Germany, accounting for 53.3% of the Jewish population of Germany in 1933.<sup>5</sup> For the Jews who could not pay for the travel, the Nazi authorities forced the Jewish business people and charities to pay. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Commission (JDC) paid millions of dollars for the exit of Jews.

Later, it was hard to squeeze anything from the remaining Jews. Also due to limited area in the cities to settle Jews, limited fuel and food, the Nazi authorities started to drive thousands of Jews out of cities, send them to concentration camps and force the young and middle-aged ones to do hard manual work. Jews from France, the Netherlands and Belgium were first driven into Ghettos and later transported to concentration camps in Eastern Europe by train. Greek Jews were tortured on their way to concentration camps and many died before they reached their destinations. The Nazi Germany also designed various programs to expel Jews in larger scale, such

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<sup>5</sup>Grobman and Landes (1982, p. 149).

as the “Madagascar Plan” which aimed to deport four million European Jews to the French colony Madagascar, where a Jewish municipality would be established under the German governorship. In June 1940, Hitler personally expressed his approval of the plan. As the war intensified, the Nazi authorities had not managed to implement any of these programs.

Phase III (1941–1945): Trying to implement the “Final Solution” to exterminate Jews. In June 1941, Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. At that time, there were more than 3 million Jews in the Soviet Union. How to deal with them became an urgent problem for the Nazis. The “Final Solution” was proposed in this context. In 1939, Hitler began to talk about the possibility of exterminating Jews in Europe. During the preparation for the war against the Soviet Union, he issued the secret order to exterminate the Jewish-Bolshevik. As literature study shows, the term “Final Solution” firstly appeared in a document endorsed by Hermann Göring, the second most powerful figure of the Nazi Party, in July 1941. The document, the Wannsee Protocol, was issued at the Wannsee Conference that addressed the Jewish question in January 1942. “Final Solution” was in fact a euphemism of exterminating the Jews in Europe. The Nazis first implemented the “Final Solution” in the Soviet Union. Four special squads (the Einsatzgruppen) were assigned to kill all the captured Jews, gypsies, political workers from the Red Army and cadres from the Communist Party, operating behind the front line. From late 1941 to early 1942, the Einsatzgruppen executed about 500,000 Jews.

In 1942, the Nazis set up gas chambers as a way to implement the “final solution” even faster. The gas chambers were usually disguised as shower rooms, where thousands of Jews were killed by toxic gas. Auschwitz, one of the most notorious concentration camps, set the record of murdering 6000 Jews a day. According to the Wannsee Protocol, “in the course of the practical execution of the final solution, Europe would be combed through from west to east.”<sup>6</sup> The Nazis also arrested Jews in Western Europe and the Balkans and sent them to the death camps in Germany and Poland, in addition to the mass killing of Jews in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The implementation of the “final solution” continued until the end of World War II. Some lucky Jewish prisoners survived the massacre thanks to the rapid advance of the Allies.

Some argue that the “Holocaust” refers only to the third phase, but the author disagrees for the following reasons. First, the three phases, which escalated, were closely and intricately related. Second, the policies and plans introduced during the first two phases laid the foundation for the “final solution” in the third phase. Third, during the first and second phases, the Jewish people had already suffered heavily, with large groups of Jews losing their lives. Therefore, the “Holocaust” involves all the three stages.

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<sup>6</sup>Eban (1986, p. 383).

### 8.3 The Holocaust Shifting the Main Stage of the Jewish Civilization

Historians' opinions vary regarding the exact number of the Jews who died of the Nazi atrocities, but most historians agree that the figure would be somewhere around six million. In the 1930s, there were about 18 million Jews across the world, 12 million of whom lived in Europe. In other words, Hitler "erased" almost one third of the total Jewish population and half of the Jewish population in Europe! That was not only genocide against Jews, but also an unprecedented catastrophe in the human history. The Holocaust destroyed the Jewish communities in Europe and brought an end to the period when the Jewish population concentrated in Europe. The United States and Palestine ascended as the new centers of the Jewish civilization.

This mad history wreaked havoc on the Jewish communities in almost all countries on the European continent, and in some countries, the Jews were "exterminated". For example, close to three million Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland had been killed by the end of the War in 1945, and the Jewish population had all but evaporated in Germany. When the Nazi anti-Semitic movement began, thousands of Jews had already fled Europe. This exodus continued during the Great War. After the war, the Holocaust survivors were no longer willing to live on this land that had caused them unspeakable sufferings. They left Europe, most going to North America and Palestine. It was estimated that prior to World War II, the Jewish population in Europe was around two thirds of the global total, but in the early postwar years, the European Jews, excluding the Jews in the Soviet Union, dropped to less than 10%. The drastic reduction in the Jewish population in the wake of the Holocaust ended a period of more than 1000 years when the majority of Jews lived in Europe. Europe was no longer the center of the Jewish civilization.

The Jews in North America and Palestine made up about half of the global Jewish population, and this proportion rose to around 70% in the late 20th century.<sup>7</sup> Obviously, North America and Palestine (Israel as well) has replaced Europe as the major Jewish population and civilization centers. In other words, the development of Jews, the revival of the Jewish civilization and the rebuilding of the Jewish state would depend more on the political and social environment in North America and Palestine. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 as the only Jewish state in the world, as well as the prominent role of American Jews in the post-war Jewish affairs in the United States and throughout the world are very good proof.

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<sup>7</sup>Massil (1996).

## 8.4 The Holocaust Strengthening the Jewish National Identity and the New Upsurge of Zionism

Having survived the Holocaust, the Jewish people rallied and supported each other to build a new life. As their awareness national identity sharpened, Zionism peaked and transformed into the actual movement to rebuild a Jewish state.

When Hitler spread crazy anti-Semitic movement across Europe, the Jewish community worldwide rallied to help their compatriots in Europe, in which the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and some Jewish societies in the United States played a major role. In 1933, some Zionist leaders reached a secret agreement with the Reich's Ministry of Economic Affairs of Nazi Germany on the Jewish immigration from Germany to Palestine. The Jews in Germany could deposit their assets in a special account in Germany to buy German goods for Palestine. Palestinian businessmen who received such goods would then reimburse the cost to the Jewish immigrants.<sup>8</sup> Organizing the Jewish immigration to Palestine was one of the most fundamental tasks of Zionism. During the Fifth Aliyah (1929–1939), the surge of German Jewish immigration into Palestine was the result of strong rescue efforts organized by the Zionists amid the Nazi anti-Semitic madness. However, Palestine's capacity was limited for accepting immigrants. As the Arab-Israeli conflict intensified, the British government imposed restrictions immigration, making it difficult for European Jews to emigrate. After the publication of the 1939 White Paper,<sup>9</sup> the WZO and the Jewish Agency could only help Jewish refugees immigrate into Palestine "illegally".

Unlike the WZO and the Jewish Agency, Jewish communities and organizations around the world had been helping Jews escape the Nazis in Europe to wherever they were welcome, instead of bringing Jews to Palestine. For this purpose, Jewish communities and organizations set up many temporary offices in Europe and other parts of the world to provide financial assistance to Jewish refugees so that they could obtain exit permits from Europe and entry or transit visas to a certain country. During the World War II, they managed to transfer a large number of Jews out of the Nazi-occupied territories. They also made considerable efforts to help the Jewish refugees stuck or temporarily sheltered in a foreign country to survive the darkest wartime period. In 1939 when Germany annexed Poland, a large number of Polish Jews fled to Lithuania and then in 1940 they had the opportunity of obtaining transit visas for Japan via a Soviet Union travel agency which charged 200 USD per person. Organizations such as JDC raised enough money so that these refugees could leave for Japan before Germany invaded the Soviet Union. The JDC Lisbon Office did an especially good job in helping Jewish refugees transit from Europe to safety. The JDC Shanghai Office was established to provide assistance for about 30,000 Jewish refugees landing in Shanghai.

The European Jews who suffered from the Nazi persecution had not passively waited for external assistance or death. Instead, they fought back in various ways.

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<sup>8</sup>Kedourie and Hain (1982).

<sup>9</sup>On May 17, 1939, the British government issued a white paper on Palestinian policy, which imposed strict restrictions on the Jewish immigration to Palestine.

In the early years of the Holocaust, the Jews could only escape or commit suicide in response to the Nazi atrocity. As anti-Semitism climaxed in Nazi Germany and spread to other Nazi-annexed territories after the Crystal Night, the Jews were forced to fight back against the Nazi violence. During World War II, a large number of Jews fought on Anti-Fascist fronts in many parts of the world, as soldiers of the Allied forces or guerrillas. Statistics show that 1685 thousand Jews joined the armed forces of the United States, the Soviet Union, the UK, Poland, France and the guerrillas around the world. Calculating by Hitler's definition of Jews (as including any Jewish blood going back two generations), the number may rise to 3 million.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, a lot of Jews participated in underground resistance against the Nazis by gathering intelligence for the Allies, building secret transport routes, destroying German military facilities and so on. Most notably, although the Jews in ghettos and concentration camps were unarmed and physically weak due to the lack of food and clothing, they organized uprisings and rebellions against the Nazis. In Eastern Europe alone, uprisings and rebellions of medium or large scale broke out in 20 ghettos and 5 concentration camps.<sup>11</sup> The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was the most famous act of Jewish resistance. It is often cited as another Masada miracle: thousands of Jewish civilians had resisted the well-equipped Nazi German troops for almost a month and caused hundreds of German casualties.

The Holocaust massacred thousands of Jews, but it had also contributed to the unprecedented solidarity of the Jewish nation. While all the Jews desperately fought for the survival, no one seemed to care about the differences between Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardi Jews, the estrangement among the Orthodox Judaism, the Conservative Judaism and the Reform Judaism, the disagreement among the different parties of the Zionist movement, the contradictions between Russian Jews and German Jews. As a result of Hitler's anti-Semitic policies, European Jews were no longer distinguished by citizenship, either German, Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, French or Russian. They were all Jews, which enhanced the ethnic awareness of Jews. To cite a few examples, Fritz Haber was a German Jewish chemist who received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry and was converted to Christianity at the age of 24. He was appointed head of a research institute for his pioneering work in developing chemical weapons during World War I but were forced to resign and suffered from Nazi persecution, nevertheless. In his letter to Albert Einstein, he wrote, "I have never felt I am a Jew in my life until this moment."<sup>12</sup> Max Liebermann, a famous German Jewish painter, had opposed Zionism and regarded himself as a German in the first place, over which he had even argued with the Hebrew master Hayyim Nahman Bialik. He still suffered from Nazi persecution and then changed his mind after the Nazi party rose to power. In his letter to Bialik, he wrote, "During the hard times when Jews are deprived of their rights to survival, solidarity with my Judaist friends is undoubtedly comforting. ... You may still remember our discussion over this issue. Back then,

<sup>10</sup>Kowalski (1984).

<sup>11</sup>Gilbert (1993, p. 102).

<sup>12</sup>Meyer (1990).

I tried to explain why I kept away from Zionism. Today I think differently. Difficult as it is, I have awakened from my fond dream.”<sup>13</sup>

Abba Eban described feelings of the European Jews who had gone through the Holocaust. “Hitler turned Jews into nationalists. They shared the conviction that 6 million Jews had been brutally murdered simply because they did not have their own country. They also knew that some Jews had managed to live a happy life in some countries, and they could no longer afford any risk. Palestine might be a good place, but they were too tired to start a new life in another place where they may still hear people cry ‘Jews out’ at them. They would not even consider whether life in Palestine would be secure or not.”<sup>14</sup> This opinion was not shared by the European Jews, but influenced all Jews throughout the world. By 1945, almost all Jews had accepted Jewish nationalism and Zionism. To some extent, the rapid formation of the Jewish homeland in Palestine was a by-product of the Holocaust.

## 8.5 The Holocaust Creating a Favorable External Environment for the Founding of Israel

The Holocaust shocked the mankind and rallied global sympathy and support for Jews and Zionism. This created a very favorable external environment and historic opportunity for the founding of Israel and the rejuvenation of the Jewish civilization.

While the Jews were being slaughtered by the Nazis, governments of other countries had merely condemned the atrocities but were reluctant to take any concrete actions to save them. In July 1938, an international conference to discuss the Jewish refugee problem was held in Evian, France. Thirty two governments sent representatives to the conference. While all the delegates expressed sympathy for Jews under Nazism, no other country than the Dominican Republic offered to accept Jewish refugees. The British White Paper of 1939 published in 1939 closed the door of Palestine to Jewish refugees. The United States, which had a large Jewish community, also imposed restrictions on the entry of Jewish refugees. In May 1939, the US government denied entry to the German transatlantic liner St. Louis, which carried 900 Jewish refugees from Europe; in 1940, the US Congress rejected a motion of opening Alaska to refugees; in 1941, the US Congress rejected the proposal to accept 20,000 German Jewish children.<sup>15</sup>

Countries were indifferent to the troubled Jews for the following reasons: First, many countries were still suffering from the economic depression and had to cope with high unemployment rates, which made the denial of entry to immigrants logical. In some countries, anti-Semites worked hard to prevent the entry of Jewish refugees. Second, facing the aggressive Nazis, the Western powers pursued an appeasement policy and did not want to risk offending Nazi Germany with the problem of Jewish

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<sup>13</sup>Meyer (1990).

<sup>14</sup>Eban (1986, pp. 414–415).

<sup>15</sup>Grobman and Landes (1982, pp. 298–299).

refugees. Third, under the imminent threat of war, some small countries such as Switzerland and Sweden that had not been invaded by Germany (later became neutral states after the war broke out) tried to stay clean from the issue of Jewish refugees. Switzerland, which had made huge profits from Jews who had deposited their money in Swiss banks, were unwilling to accept Jewish refugees. Fourth, some countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America were unable to resettle Jewish refugees because of their own financial difficulties. For example, although Dominica had expressed its willingness to accept Jewish refugees, the country could not afford to resettle them without any external assistance.

Although governments were reluctant to accept Jewish refugees, a large number of sympathetic individuals, organizations, charity agencies and many junior officials from a lot of countries tried every means to help them escape the Holocaust. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its affiliates in many countries had got directly involved in the rescuing efforts, especially during the war. Because they had access to the areas controlled by the warring parties, the Red Cross staff played a special role in saving Jews from the Holocaust. The Christian Church had always been prejudiced against Jews, but when the Nazi anti-Semitic violence intensified, many bishops and priests openly expressed their support for the Jewish refugees. In France, Netherlands and Belgium, churches were often used to shelter Jews. After the war broke out, guerrillas active in many places rescued Jews. It is important to note that diplomats from many countries also tried to save Jews. Feng-Shan Ho, China's consul in Vienna during World War II, was one of the earliest diplomats to rescue Jewish refugees by issuing them visas. He helped thousands of Jewish refugees flee the Nazi-occupied areas.<sup>16</sup> Chinue Sugihara, the Japanese consul in Kaunas, Lithuania, issued transit visas to some 2000 Jewish refugees who were able to flee from Poland and Lithuania. While serving as neutral Sweden's special envoy in Hungary, Raoul Wallenberg saved thousands of Jews from Nazi-occupied Hungary by giving them protective passports. Even some Germans secretly helped Jews. Among them was Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist, who saved 1200 Jews during the Holocaust. The famous film Schindler's List was based on this period of his life.

In North America, East Asia, Australia, Latin America, and even South Africa, a great number of righteous men had offered their support for Jews. For example, the China Civil Rights Protection League led by Madam Soong Ching-Ling submitted a protest to the German Consulate in Shanghai in 1933, condemning Hitler's anti-Semitic violence. Shanghai, the war-torn oriental city, took in over 30,000 Jewish refugees from Europe from 1933 to December 1941 before the Pacific War broke out. Some 25,000 of these refugees had stayed in Shanghai until the end of World War II.<sup>17</sup> According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center, an international organization dedicated to research on the Holocaust, the number of Jewish refugees housed in Shanghai was much more than the total number of refugees going to Canada, Australia, New

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<sup>16</sup>Zuobin (2007).

<sup>17</sup>Guang (2015).

Zealand, South Africa, and India combined.<sup>18</sup> Latin American countries Salvador and Dominica also took in a number of Jewish refugees.

After the war, the Knesset passed a law requiring the Israeli government to thank all non-Jewish people or families who had helped Jews during the Holocaust and award medals and prizes to them to recognize their generosity. By May 1, 1990, a total of 8611 people had been cited by the Israeli government.<sup>19</sup> This is, however, a tiny proportion of the non-Jews who had helped the Jews. In some way, they were evidences of the non-Jewish world's opposition to the Nazi atrocities and their sympathy for the Jews under Nazism.

As the worldwide solidarity with Jews consolidated, especially when the West got the real message of the Nazi "Final Solution" via Switzerland in 1942, the major powers changed their attitude. World leaders condemned the Nazi atrocity and agreed on the urgency to take actions. However, the escalating war rendered some of the actions impossible. In early 1943, another international conference was held in Bermuda to discuss the Jewish refugee problems. A lot of measures were proposed, but few of them were implemented. In 1944, Heinrich Himmler, head of the Nazi SS, proposed that Nazi Germany could stop sending Jews to death camps if the Western allies could supply Germany with 10,000 trucks. Zionist leaders tried to negotiate this exchange proposal, but the leaders of the allies refused, believing that it was impossible to give their enemy so many trucks when they were at war. The Jewish leaders suggested bombing Auschwitz, but they were snubbed by the allies for "technical reasons." At the last moment of the war, the allies had to speed up their advance to save the remaining Jews in the death camps. In spring 1945, as the Allies liberated one camp after another, the shocking truth of the Holocaust was revealed to the whole world which led to the rapid growth of global sympathy with Jews and support for Zionism.

In this context, the major powers shifted their policies on the Jewish issue from mere sympathy to supporting the rebuilding of the Jewish state in Palestine. In October 1944, the US President Roosevelt declared that "I understand the Jews had eagerly sought and prayed for a free and democratic Jewish Republic. I believe the American people support this purpose. If I am re-elected, I will help them achieve this goal."<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the Republican Party issued a similar campaign message, "In order to give refuge to millions of distressed Jewish men, women and children driven from their homes by tyranny, we call for the opening of Palestine to their unrestricted immigration and land ownership, so that... Palestine may be constituted as a free and democratic Commonwealth."<sup>21</sup> It is worth noting that the Soviet Union, which condemned Zionism as akin to bourgeois nationalism and had prohibited Zionism movement within its territory since 1928, also changed their position. In 1943, the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Ivan Maiskii visited Palestine and met with the Jewish Agency and Zionist leaders. In the late period of World War II, the Soviet Union fiercely attacked the Nazi for their atrocities, but Zionism was

<sup>18</sup>Grobman and Landes (1982, pp. 298–299).

<sup>19</sup>Gilbert (1993, p. 104).

<sup>20</sup>New York Times, October 13, 1944.

<sup>21</sup>Kirk (1954).

rarely mentioned. On May 14, 1947, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko spoke at the UN special committee on Palestine. He recalled the great misfortune and suffering of the Jewish people and stated that the Soviet Union supported “the two-state solution”: division of Palestine a Jewish state and an Arab state.<sup>22</sup> This is the first time the Soviet Union had explicitly supported the reestablishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. This change of position has deep roots in the politics and economy, but the shared sympathy under the Holocaust played an even bigger role. In the first place, thousands of Soviet Union citizens died of the Nazi invasion during World War II, so the Soviet people had sympathy for the Jews who had gone through the same catastrophe; second, as their ethnic awareness sharpened after the Holocaust, popular support for Zionism arose in the Soviet Union. Obviously, the Soviet leaders took this popular sympathy into consideration when they decided on their position.

In a word, when World War II gradually came to an end, all nations felt the same urgency to find a safe place for the survivors of the Holocaust, or a new homeland for Jews. If no other country could provide such a place, the only solution to the problem once and for all may be to support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The Nazis had wanted to exterminate Jews from the world, but their outrageous acts had urged the international community to designate a safe place for the Jewish people as soon as possible.

## 8.6 The Holocaust as a Permanent Evidence for Enhancing the Jewish Ethnic Education

The Holocaust is a permanent trauma for Jews, exerting a deep and far-reaching influence on the Jewish ideology, literature and art. In a sense, this history is a negative example for Jewish identity education and helps enhance their national cohesion.

In May 1945, when the news that World War II ended spread to Palestine, the United States and other parts of the world, the Jews there held and waved blacklined banners in memory of their compatriots murdered during the Holocaust while they celebrated the victory. As details of the Holocaust came out, almost every Jewish family found out that they had lost some of their family members or friends in the catastrophe. Thousands of people had been murdered merely because they were Jews. The trauma is palpable in the hearts of the surviving Jews. The Israeli government passed a decree in 1951 to establish the Holocaust memorial day on the 27th day of the month of Nisan in the Jewish calendar (April in the Gregorian calendar). Every year on this day, Jews in Israel and around the world would burn candles to commemorate the 6 million Jews who were brutally murdered by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. Many other tragic days during the Holocaust are also marked to remember the victims. November 9 is the remembrance day for the Kristallnacht in 1938. Many

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<sup>22</sup>Institute of International Relations: References to the Palestine Question, World Knowledge Press, 1960, pp. 53–60.

people would visit and pay tribute to the graves of German Jewish victims on that day. Around April 19, people all over the world would organize and attend ceremonies in memory of the Warriors in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943. In 1970, the German Chancellor Willy Brandt knelt down before the monument to the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and confessed on behalf of all Germans and the country. The 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1993 became a very political and sensational event. Meanwhile, the US President Bill Clinton chaired the opening ceremony for the “Herald of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum” (HMM) in Washington. HMM, the largest Holocaust memorial in the world, was established by an act of the American Congress. In order not to forget the tragedy of the Holocaust, the German government dedicated January 27 to the victims of Nazi rule, because on January 27, 1945, the Soviet Red Army liberated the Auschwitz concentration camp. In November 2005, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution to mark January 27 as the annual international commemoration day to honor the victims of the Holocaust.

While commemorating the victims, the righteous people have never forgotten to seek justice for victims. For more than 70 years, many Jewish volunteers, especially the survivors of the Holocaust, as well as their supporters, have made great efforts and achievements in collecting evidences of the Nazi brutality and hunting down Nazi war criminals. The Simon Wiesenthal Center has interviewed and collected testimonies from tens of thousands of the Holocaust survivors and witnesses and located thousands of Nazi war criminals. In 1960, Israel sent a squad, the Mossad, to Argentina to capture Adolf Eichmann and took him back to Israel. He was found guilty of war crimes in a publicized trial and hanged in 1962. The righteous efforts still continue now. For the righteous world, the Holocaust is unforgettable. Justice must be sought for the victims as far as it is possible.

The Holocaust has also profoundly affected the Jewish culture. In the past seven decades, a great number of novels, movies and dramas have been created on the Holocaust by Jewish writers and artists. They have not only been appreciated by Jews but have a tremendous influence on other peoples, including the Chinese people. Works like “Border Street” (Polish: Ulica Graniczna), “Dr. Mamen”, “Voyage of the Damned”, “Nazi Holocaust”, “The Winds of War”, “War and Remembrance”, “Schindler’s List”, “La vita è bella”, “The Pianist”, “Black Book” and “The Reader” have shocked the people with conscience. This tragic history has become an enduring theme not only in the Jewish literature, but also in the literature and art of the whole world.

Nevertheless, some argue that the Holocaust has put a negative impact on Jewish ideology by enhancing their feeling of being encircled and persecuted. There is a strong feeling as if anti-Semitism still exists. Due to their extreme sensitivity to security issues, Jews would try aggressively to eradicate any threats to their safety. As a result, many Jewish nationalist organizations have emerged and taken some extreme actions; some Jewish militants have even resorted to terrorism; Israel builds security zones and includes preemptive strikes in its national security policies. On the other hand, some deny the negative impact on the Jewish ideology, believing that the Holocaust justifies such overreactions.

On the contrary, the Holocaust has positive impacts, as it is a reminder of the historical tragedy and enhances Jewish awareness and cohesion. Israel has developed a national network of Holocaust education, with the Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem in Jerusalem at the center. Moreover, Jewish communities worldwide, for instance in the United States, Canada and Australia, have built similar education networks. In large or medium-sized cities, Jewish communities have built Holocaust memorials or education centers. Even in very small Jewish communities, a special section would be dedicated to the Holocaust education in synagogues or community centers. Every Jewish child would be brought to these memorials or education centers to get in touch with the history. On Holocaust memorial days, local residents would also gather there for commemorative events. Academic seminars and public lectures are also often organized to discuss the causes of the Holocaust, draw lessons from the tragedy, and explore means to prevent any similar tragedy in the future. In fact, Holocaust education has become an integral part of modern Jewish education. In other words, as long as the Jewish nation exists, the Holocaust will never be forgotten and Holocaust education will last for generations. It does not only focus on the Holocaust, but also aims to enhance the cohesion of Jews.

On November 29, 1947, two and a half years after the Holocaust was put to an end, the United Nations passed the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine, recognizing that Jews have the right to establish a national state in Palestine. At 4 pm on May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared “the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.”

Adolf Hitler had never expected that his Jews extermination plan would accelerate the revival of a Jewish state and the Jewish civilization. It may be a universal law in human civilization that a catastrophe would lead to national revival.

## 8.7 Conclusions

The Holocaust was unprecedented in scale and brutality, exceeding any previous anti-Semitic movement, casting a profound impact on Jews and the Jewish civilization. Firstly, the Holocaust destroyed Jewish communities in Europe and brought an end to the Euro-centrism of Jews. Secondly, the Holocaust enhanced the Jewish identity awareness and revived Zionism, thus laying a solid foundation for the establishment of a Jewish state. Thirdly, the Holocaust shocked all people in the world, aroused universal sympathy for Jews and spread pro-Zionist sentiments, creating a favorable external environment and a historic opportunity for founding the State of Israel. Lastly, the Holocaust had a profound influence on the Jewish ideology, literature and art, promoting Jewish ethnic education and enhancing the national cohesion of Jews.

The Holocaust drove thousands of Jewish refugees to China, making a very special, memorable and heart-warming history of Sino-Jewish relations.

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# Chapter 9

## The Push-Pull Theory and Motivations of Jewish Refugees



“Push and pull theory” is one of the most important theories for studying floating population and immigrants. The theory holds that the reasons for migration and immigration are because people can improve their living conditions through migration. As a result, the factors that have caused immigrants to improve their living conditions in the inflow areas have become the pull force of the floating population, and the unfavorable socio-economic conditions of the outflow areas have become the thrust of the floating population. Population migration is accomplished through the combined effect of the thrust of the outflow areas and the pull force of the inflow areas. This chapter attempts to use this theory to analyze the motivation of Jewish refugees’ fleeing to China during the World War II.

### 9.1 The Push-Pull Theory and Types of Immigrants

1. **Push-Pull.** The push-pull model is the earliest and most widely used model of human migration and the motives. In the 1880s, the German-English geographer cartographer E. G. Ravenstein established the patterns of human migration. He believed that human migration is not any blind and chaotic movement; instead it follows a certain pattern.<sup>1</sup> He argued that the motivation of human migration comes from the two-way factors: push from the origin country and pull from the new country. In the “push-pull model”, push refers to negative factors in the origin location (or country). It can be a non-economic factor that has a universal impact on a certain area such as war, turmoil, natural disasters, and deterioration of the ecological environment, or political or social unrest impacting a certain group of population. It can also be an economic factor such as unemployment, economic crisis or poverty in the origin country. Likewise, pull means the positive economic, environmental and social factors in the new location (or country). It can be the promise of new opportunities, or a special opportunity for a small

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<sup>1</sup>Li (2000).

group. Every individual may weigh the costs and benefits of migration, or the “push” and “pull” factors.<sup>2</sup>

In a word, the push-pull model holds that in market economy and given the freedom of movement, human migration occurs because people see the potential of improving their life quality through migration. The factors that attract immigrants to improve their living conditions in the new location are pull factors of human migration, while the unfavorable social economic factors in the origin location are push factors. Migration is driven by the combined effects of push and pull factors. Therefore, in the push-pull model, human migration is a process in which a certain group is passively pushed and pulled.<sup>3</sup>

2. **Types of immigrants.** According to their motives of human migration, immigrants can be divided into three main types: labor immigrants, family immigrants and refugees.<sup>4</sup> The term “refugees” was coined in France, and it was borrowed by the UK when the country took in the Huguenots who fled persecution by the French Catholic Church in the late 17th century. The UK also accepted a number of revolutionaries from continental Europe such as Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin. Later, the UK passed the Aliens Act 1905, which for the first introduced immigrant control and rejected aliens from entering the UK. The Act had been intended mainly to control Jewish immigration from Russia and Eastern Europe. The Act ostensibly rejected four categories of immigrants: patients, madmen, criminals and people who may increase the burden on government welfare. It also introduced a distinction between refugees and other immigrants, stating that those who were considered vulnerable to persecution were exempted from the above restriction.<sup>5</sup>

The United States made the same distinction between refugees and ordinary immigrants after WWI, and led the establishment of the International Refugee Protection Agency under the League of Nations. The agency established a refugee office in Russia in 1923 and in Germany in 1933, which was a major move of the international community to protect refugees. However, during World War II, the UK continued to impose restrictions on the Jewish refugees who wanted to enter the UK to escape the Nazi persecution. Only a small part of the Jewish refugees were accepted.<sup>6</sup> The Jewish refugees applying to enter the UK must prove that they would be self sufficient. Therefore, the poor Jews who depended on charitable organizations were rejected.<sup>7</sup>

3. **War Refugees.** In the 20th century, war was the major cause of human migration.<sup>8</sup> During the two World Wars, especially during World War II, the most astonishing immigration is the exodus of refugees who were forced to leave their homeland,

<sup>2</sup>Sales (2011).

<sup>3</sup>Song (2007).

<sup>4</sup>Sales, *Understanding Immigration and Refugee Policy: Contradictions and Continuities*, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup>Sales, *Understanding Immigration and Refugee Policy: Contradictions and Continuities*, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup>London (2000).

<sup>7</sup>Saggar (1992).

<sup>8</sup>Goucher and Walton (2013).

rather than labor immigrants or immigrants actively seeking for better living conditions. In Europe, the refugees during World War II were roughly divided into three categories. The first category was refugees fleeing the Netherlands, Belgium and France which were occupied by German troops after the Blitzkrieg Attack. Some of them crossed the English Channel and sought refuge in the UK. As a result, the UK became an asylum country for refugees from many western European countries. The second category was refugees from Poland, the Czech Republic and other Central and Eastern European countries, who were forced by the Nazi occupiers to other newly annexed areas as alternative labor to support economic operation in wartime Germany. The third category was Jewish refugees who had been persecuted by the Nazis. From 1933 to 1941, Jewish refugees from Nazi German and German-annexed territories could still move to other countries by legal means, but after 1941, the Nazis changed their anti-Semitic policy from expelling them to planned segregation and slaughter, resulting in a sharp drop of Jewish refugees fleeing Europe.

When World War II ended, there were 30 million<sup>9</sup> displaced refugees globally, and this number drove the international community to make the refugee issue a priority and signed the Geneva Convention on Refugees in 1951. Geneva Convention became the basis of refugee laws and policies adopted by many countries. It defined a refugee as a person who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”<sup>10</sup> Since then, the UNCHR has served as the special agency to provide assistance to international refugees. According to the relevant international laws, sovereign states may verify foreigners or stateless persons who apply for asylum. Once the applicant is recognized as a refugee, the receiving country must respect refugees’ basic rights to life, work and religious beliefs under the humanitarian principle.

## 9.2 Pushing Factors for Jewish Refugees to Flee Europe

Asylum is a form of protection available to people who meet the definition of a refugee. As a category of human migration, asylum-seeking migration is the process of seeking for protection in a new country. There are active asylum-seeking migration and passive asylum-seeking migration. Passive migration occurs in two situations: refugees seeking for relief and protection in a new country due to severe natural disasters in the origin country, and refugees seeking protection from ethnic, religious or political persecution in the new country. On the contrary, most active immigrants

<sup>9</sup>Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo, *Escape from violence: Conflict and the refugee crisis in the developing world*, p. 21.

<sup>10</sup>Sales, *Understanding Immigration and Refugee Policy: Contradictions and Continuities*, p. 68.

want to safeguard or pursue their special interests. Most of them are businessmen who try to evade tax. By the above definition, the European Jewish refugees fleeing to China during World War II were the typical passive asylum-seeking immigrants, and the push factor is obvious.

It is worth mentioning that migration is both a personal behavior and a social process. When individuals, families and groups make migration decisions in a specific social, political or economic context, the context is both an opportunity and a restriction on their migration. Refugee migration is not only passive but also lacks choice. Refugees are usually involuntary or forced immigrants, driven by non-economic factors. They don't even have time to plan when, how and where to go. The journey is always unpredictable and dangerous. The vast majority of European Jewish refugees in China had experienced a painful journey which was often contrary to their expectation.

Despite German Jews suffered from Hitler's economic pressure, the key push factors in the exodus of European Jewish refugees are noneconomic, mostly political, cultural and psychological ones. According to Michael Paul Todaro, political freedom is often a pull factor of migration.<sup>11</sup> In the Push-Pull model, the influence of noneconomic factors on migration cannot be underestimated, which is the case with the Jewish refugees in China. Since most Jewish refugees came from Europe under Nazism, the push factors, such as the unprecedented surge of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and the immigration restrictions imposed by many countries due to the economic crisis and threats of war, played a far greater role than the pull factors from China.

Between January 1933 and August 1939, Nazi Germany proclaimed a series of anti-Semitic decrees to expel Jews from Germany. Since March 9, 1933, a wave of riots against German Jews rose in Berlin first and then swiftly spread to other German cities. On April 1, 1933, an economic boycott against German Jews was declared. On April 7, the Nazi regime passed the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, which excluded 2000 Jews from governmental positions. On April 22, Jewish doctors were prohibited from Medical Insurance and Socialized-Medicine Cases, thus being excluded from German hospitals. On Sept. 29, Jewish artists were thrown out of the German Artists Association. In the same year, Jewish students at institutes of higher education were cut down to less than 1%. In 1935, anti-Jewish policies escalated in Nazi Germany. On Sept. 15, the anti-Semitic Nuremberg Laws were issued, officially revoking the civil rights of German Jews. In 1939, the Reich Representation of German Jews was annulled, and a new organization the Reich Association of Jews in Germany was established instead to implement anti-Semitic directives, especially concerning the deportation of Jews.

It is estimated that from the enactment of the Nuremberg Laws to late 1935, 8000 Jews committed suicide under unbearable persecutions, and 75,000 Jews went into exile. Anti-Semitism reached its climax after the Kristallnacht in November 1938, after which a large number of Jews sought for asylum visas from foreign embassies and consulates. After Nazi Germany annexed Austria, the Czech Republic and Poland

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<sup>11</sup>Todaro (1969).

from 1938 to 1939, Jews were transported out of these Central and Eastern European countries. 182,000 Austrian Jews and 118,000 Czech Jews were forced to abandon their homeland. From 1933 to 1941, approximately 267,000 Jews left Germany, accounting for nearly half of the total German Jewish population. On the eve of World War II, some 400,000–410,000 Jews were forced away from Nazi-occupied Europe.

Of course, economic factors are important push factors for Jewish refugees to travel to China. After Hitler rose to power, nearly all German Jewish assets were confiscated under economic anti-Semitism. Then, economic persecution against Jews spread to Nazi-occupied territories. In fact, many Jews who later became refugees in China after the Kristallnacht had been tycoons in Germany and Austria but were deprived of all assets prior to their deportation.<sup>12</sup> Although they had less influence and effect than the noneconomic factors, economic factors were still strong push factors for Jewish refugees.

### 9.3 Pulling Effect of China as a Haven for Jewish Refugees

China had a strong pull for Jewish refugees.

First of all, from the ancient times, anti-Semitism had never emerged or grown in China.

Jews first came to China between the 7th and the 8th century, formed a Jewish community in Kaifeng in the Song Dynasty and gradually assimilated into Chinese society. It is a rare case in the history of the Jewish diaspora that a Jewish community had merged into the local society without external force. Comparing them with the Jewish community in Europe, the hub of Jewish activities, it is rather obvious that the Kaifeng Jews had assimilated into Chinese society mainly because of the equal rights they enjoyed with the local Chinese nationals and freedom from anti-Semitism, in addition to marriage with the Chinese locals, participation in the Chinese imperial examinations, adoption of Chinese names and mastery of the Chinese language.

Some of them had become business tycoons, some had become government officials through the Chinese imperial examination, and some others had won titles and awards from the government and even the Emperor. In the meantime, their European compatriots were subjected to ethnic discriminations in economic, political and cultural spheres. As described above, assimilation is a process in which different groups gradually resemble each other and are even finally accepted as the same. European Jews never achieved the same status as the majority ethnic or religion groups and therefore it was difficult for them to be mainstreamed into the local society and culture. However, Kaifeng Jews have enjoyed equal rights as their Chinese neighbors (mainly the Han ethnic), so their assimilation into the Chinese society is out of question.

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<sup>12</sup>Shenbao, December 5, 1938, Shanghai.

In the modern and contemporary periods, while anti-Semitism swept across Europe once and again, the Jewish community in China has enjoyed peace and stable development. Besides, the Chinese government and people have always been sympathetic to Jews and supported them in building new homes in China. On November 2, 1917, the Balfour Declaration was issued, announcing the UK's support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. Not long later, Chen Lu, vice foreign minister of the Chinese government, wrote to Elly S. Kadoorie, the SZA chairman, pledging that the Chinese government held the same attitude toward Zionism as the British Government.<sup>13</sup> Dr. Sun Yat-Sen also wrote to N. E. B. Ezra on April 24, 1920, to express his support for the Zionist movement.<sup>14</sup> When big crowds of Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai, the local Shanghai people who were suffering from the Japanese occupation gave generous assistance to their Jewish "guests". The Oriental Magazine published in 1939 in Shanghai noted, "Although there were well over 100 thousand refugees in Shanghai under great hardship, the Shanghai locals helped the Jewish refugees generously .... After all, we must unite with other suffering ethnic groups to fight back against our enemies."<sup>15</sup>

Second, unlike Christianity which is at odds with the Jewish culture, the Chinese Confucian culture shares some common ground with the Jewish culture.

For one thing, both Chinese and Jewish traditions stress family ethics. As it is the case with most Chinese families, it is common for three generations or four generations of a Jewish family to live under the same roof. In fact, the Jewish classics Talmud and China's Confucian classics advocate shared values, such as filial piety, respect for seniors and care for juniors. Another value shared between Chinese and Jews is their emphasis on education. Talmud and China's Confucian classics urge people to distinguish themselves through learning. A Jewish synagogue is not only a place for religious services but a school where Jews attend education activities. On Sundays, there are lectures designed for Jewish teenagers in synagogues. Therefore, when the word "synagogue" is translated into Chinese, it becomes a "house of Jewish assembly". It means much more than a "church". In addition, both Jews and Chinese have the tenacity to survive tough circumstances and are keen on doing business. These similarities spelt into a strong pull to the Jewish refugees. Besides, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Harbin and Tianjin were international, or Westernized, metropolises brimming with business opportunities. The favorable social, cultural and economic conditions are powerful pull factors for Jewish refugees to come to China.

Third, some cities in China, especially Shanghai, were open to outside world and offered good living and entrepreneurial conditions for business and technical people alike.

After the First Opium War (1840–1842), the western powers forced China to open its door. They took control of Hong Kong and set up foreign concessions as "states within a state" in China's large cities like Shanghai and Tianjin. For a long time, Shanghai had remained open to immigrants without visa requirement.

<sup>13</sup>Central Zionist Archives, Doc. No. Z4/2039.

<sup>14</sup>See the Annex II to the Chap. 3.

<sup>15</sup>He (1939).

In fact, from 1937 to 1939, Shanghai was the only haven in the world for refugees without a visa. Since many European Jewish refugees were technical experts, such as auto mechanics, electricians, machine tool specialists and chemical engineers,<sup>16</sup> they could continue and even further develop their careers in Shanghai. The early European Jewish refugees mostly lived in the French Concession. Many of them practiced medicine, gave art performances and taught private students, and others worked for hospitals, schools, companies or factories.

Later, many new refugees settled in an area called Tilanqiao in Hongkou and managed small businesses. These Jewish refugees kept their dietary habits and lifestyle of Europe. Their homemade foods like ice cream and whipped cream attracted the local residents, and their business operation brought back the Tilanqiao area from the ruins of war. To sum up, the push factors and the pull factors in the economic sphere had equal power for Jewish refugees in Shanghai.

Fourth, the early Jews who had already settled in China provided support and relief for the Jewish refugees through their strong social network.

Human migration, including the Jewish refugees fleeing to Shanghai, should be considered in the broad structural context and also the particular social context where the immigrants lived. According to M. Boyd, “Structural factors provide the context that shapes the migration decisions of individuals or groups. However, the decision to migrate is also influenced by the existence of a social network, which connects people across geographical space.”<sup>17</sup> A social network may provide immigrants with a wide range of resources in the form of information and assistance, such as journey planning and accommodation and employment opportunities, and thus helps them settle in the host country. Whether immigrants can participate in the social network in the host country depends on the prior connection between the immigrants and the host community. In general, a social network offers three types of support: **emotional support** from family and friends which is crucial for preventing social isolation; **information support** by friends or channels such as consultants or community centers; and **instrumental support** which involves the broader social network, including employment, translation and legal services.<sup>18</sup>

Diaspora immigration has three key characteristics: dispersion in space, the desire to return to the homeland, and the tendency to maintain the group identity. As typical diaspora, Jewish communities in the world have formed a broad social network around the world which has extended emotional, information, and instrumental support for Jewish refugees. Jewish cemeteries and synagogues are often symbols of a Jewish community. Since 1870, the Jews in Shanghai have not only built synagogues and cemeteries, but also schools and various community organizations. By the 1930s, the Jewish community in Shanghai had about 5000 members and they had their own community associations, religious associations, synagogues, schools, hospitals, nurs-

<sup>16</sup>Wen Junxiong translated, “Historical Materials on Chinese and Foreign Charities Assisting European Jewish refugees in Shanghai (3)”, Republican Archives, 2000, No. 2.

<sup>17</sup>M. Boyd, Family and personal networks in international migration: recent developments and new agendas, International Migration Review, Vol. 23, pp. 638–670.

<sup>18</sup>Sales, Understanding Immigration and Refugee Policy, p. 49.

ing homes, cemeteries, chambers of commerce, political groups, newspapers, and even small armed forces (the Jewish unit under the Shanghai Volunteer Corps).<sup>19</sup> These Jewish organizations with different purposes and functions were ready to provide relief when the Jewish refugees landed in Shanghai. For more details, refer to Chap. 18.

About the motivation of the Jewish migration to China during World War II, Nazi Germany's outrageous conduct to expel and exterminate Jews was the force that pushed Jewish refugees in Germany and Central and Eastern Europe to go into exile, and the attractive political and economic environment in China, in particular Shanghai, was the force that pulls the Jewish refugees to China. At the same time, the well-established Jewish communities in Shanghai, Tianjin and Harbin, forming a broad social network, provided strong relief to the Jewish refugees. The combination of the push factors and the pull factors created a haven for about 30,000 Jewish refugees and also made the communication between Confucianism and the Jewish civilization possible in the Far East. It is an embodiment of the Chinese inclusiveness and generosity and the Jewish tradition of mutual assistance.

## 9.4 Pushing and Pulling Factors for the Department of Jewish Refugees After the War

The Jews who came to China during World War II were really refugees. For them, Shanghai was only a temporary shelter, so once the war was over, they were eager to return to their homeland. In the first place, they wanted to look for their family members in Europe. In addition, Chinese cities were obviously less modernized than European cities, and there was still a wide gap between the Chinese and Western cultures, which were the push factors for Jewish refugees. After China's civil war broke out, a large number of Jewish refugees left China due to their fear of China's political uncertainty and risks. Many Jewish refugees first went back to their homeland in Europe, but they found that almost all their relatives had died during the Holocaust. Most of them then moved to countries such as the United States, Australia and Canada which accepted refugees.

In 1948, the newly-established State of Israel actively called on Jews all over the world to return to their "homeland", which became an important pull factor in the post-war migration of Jews to Israel. Shortly after its establishment, the Israeli government listed Shanghai as a second-level of priority city in diplomacy, in order to satisfy the needs of immigrants from East Asia. In December 1948, the Israeli government sent Moshe Yuval as representative of the Immigration Department to Shanghai to issue visas to Jewish immigrants. With the help of the Shanghai Zionist Association leader Yakov Lieberman, Yuval enabled thousands of Shanghai Jews to immigrate to Israel.<sup>20</sup> The Jewish Agency in Jerusalem also played a role in getting

<sup>19</sup>Pan and Wang (2002).

<sup>20</sup>Goldstein (2006, pp. 17–18).

the Jewish immigrants from Shanghai. The Agency helped them book ship and flight tickets. From autumn 1948 to spring 1949, about 5000 Jews left Shanghai for Israel, most of whom were Russian and European refugees.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, there were two special Jewish organizations in Shanghai that facilitated the immigration of Jews: the Emergency Relief Committee for Jews in Far East, which was responsible for collecting cash from affluent Jewish immigrants; and the Palestinian Jewish Association in the Far East, which was responsible for dealing with other affairs related to immigration, including the transportation of seriously ill Jewish refugees via a third country to Palestine, and issues of mixed-nationality families who wanted to immigrate to Israel.<sup>22</sup>

Two other agencies were also actively engaged in the transfer of Jewish immigrants from Shanghai to their homeland: the JDC Shanghai Office and the Council of the Jewish Community Shanghai (known as JEU). JEU was established on June 1, 1949 as a voluntary charity organization to handle the affairs of the Jewish community in Shanghai, mainly to coordinate the activities of the Jewish community as well as help Jews transfer to countries willing to accept them. After JDC Shanghai Office was closed in 1951, JEU was put in the position to help the vulnerable Jews in China who had difficulty in obtaining visas to find a receiving country, with the help of the World Jewish Refugee Relief Organization. JDC provided financial assistance to JEU. In a word, the strong pull factors, including the motivating immigration policies of Israeli and the help from Jewish organizations, accounted for the departure of Jewish refugees from China after World War II.

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<sup>21</sup> Wang, A History of Shanghai Jewish Social Life, p. 340.

<sup>22</sup> Goldstein (2006, p. 5).

# Chapter 10

## Exile and Perseverance: The Ethnic Diaspora Theory and the Jewish Refugee Community in China



The Jewish Refugee Community in China are special groups of Jews formed during the long history of Jewish diaspora and therefore the formation and development of this particular community has not only the basic characteristics of Jewish diaspora but reflects the influence of a specific historical period. This chapter studies the formation and characteristics of the Jewish refugee community in China and the influence of specific historic conditions on their collective behavior and psychology, as well as the influence on the Jewish community in Shanghai.

### 10.1 Basic Characteristics of Diasporic Ethnic Groups and Studies on Ethnic Diaspora

Diaspora studies focus on the adaptation, integration and conflicts confronted by diaspora ethnic groups during economic and cultural exchanges in the host society. The definition and identification of diaspora groups are the key subject matters. According to William Safran,<sup>1</sup> the concept of diaspora applies to expatriate minority communities whose members share several of the following characteristics: (1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original “center” to two or more “peripheral”, or foreign, regions; (2) they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland—its physical location, history, and achievements; (3) they believe that they are not—and perhaps cannot be—fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; (4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return—when conditions are appropriate; (5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and (6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by

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<sup>1</sup>Safran (1991).

the existence of such a relationship. In short, common knowledge and psychological experience associated with their homelands define their identity to a great extent.

According to two Jewish scholars, Gabriel Shefferre of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Robin Cohen of Oxford University, the term “Diaspora” is derived from the Greek root “speiro” which means to sow and the prefix “dia” means to disperse.<sup>2</sup> The word first appeared in the Greek translation of Deuteronomy of the Old Testament in the third century BC. Since then, this term has been used to refer to the dispersal of Jews after exile in Babylon in 586 BC. Since the 1950s and 1960s, western scholars have extended the usage of the term ‘diaspora’ to the dispersion of African, Armenian, Irish and other ethnic groups. In recent years, new terms like “Chinese diaspora” and “Muslim diaspora” have been known, and “Diaspora” with capitalized initial letter has been replaced by “diaspora”. In 1986, Shefferre defined Diasporas in A New Field of study: Modern Diasporas in International Politics as “ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin—their homelands”. As a result, “diaspora” apples to the study of modern ethnic relations, rather than the traditional dispersal of the Jewish habitat. University of Toronto’s Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies claims that “Diaspora is dedicated to the multidisciplinary study of the history, culture, social structure, politics and economics of both the traditional diasporas—Jewish, Greek and Armenian—and those transnational dispersions which in the past three decades have chosen to identify themselves as diasporas”.<sup>3</sup> On this basis, western scholars have studied and classified diasporas, and the Jewish Diaspora is regarded as the “ideal type” of diaspora.<sup>4</sup>

Shefferre argues that the Jewish diaspora, as well as the Greek and Armenian dispersions during the Ottoman Empire is a phenomenon peculiar to the pre-modern society and belongs to the classical diaspora. These ethnic groups had glorious civilizations or once built powerful dynasties but have been conquered through war. They were therefore subjected to the rule of aliens and dispersed from their homelands. Their social activities are often restricted in the host country, where they have lower social status and are banned from mixed marriage. To some extent, traditional diaspora often has negative implications, or associations with the tragic experience of a particular forcibly displaced group.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the inferior social status of dispersed ethnic groups in the host country explains why they wanted to maintain their own ethnic identity by renewing again and again the memory of their ancestral homeland. Anthony Smith argues that ethnic diasporas, represented by the Jewish diaspora, have not been dissolved after centuries or even thousands of years because of the “filiation, as well as cultural affinity, with the remote past in which a community was formed, a community that despite all the changes it has undergone, is still

<sup>2</sup>Sheffer (2003), Cohen (2008, pp. 21–22).

<sup>3</sup>Li (2010a).

<sup>4</sup>Safran (1991).

<sup>5</sup>On the relationship between classical and modern diaspora, refer to Zhu Jingcai, The Rise and Basic Trends of the Study of Diaspora, Social No. 4, 2012, pp. 197–203. Op. cit. Li Minghuan. Diaspora: Definition, Differentiation, Aggregation and Reconstruction, pp. 3–5.

in some sense recognized as the same community”.<sup>6</sup> According to Robin Cohen, the Jewish diaspora has formed through catastrophic historical events which traumatized the entire ethnic group and created a historical experience centering on the victims of persecution. Victim diaspora is mainly characterized by dispersal, following a traumatic event in the homeland, to two or more foreign countries. Prototypical diasporas, like the Jewish diaspora, share two elements: “the traumatic dispersal from an original homeland and the salience of the homeland in the collective memory of a forcibly dispersed group”.<sup>7</sup>

However, Abba Eban and Robin Cohen have found that the migration of Jews involved complex and varied reasons; they were not all forced or traumatic. Abba Eban emphasized that “exile and dispersion are two different concepts and must be clearly distinguished. Exile is forced banishment, while dispersion means people voluntarily spread to a foreign land. Both have occurred in the Jewish history. Even if they were banished into exile, Jews could adapt to the new environment and build new settlements in a foreign country.” As Abba Eban discovered, the Jewish exile settlement appeared roughly at the same time as the Jewish nation. Jews first left Palestine due to natural disasters. Later, they were banished by alien occupiers. Jews also settled abroad for business purposes. The overpopulation of Palestine was also an important reason for Jewish emigration.<sup>8</sup> Robin Cohen believed that homelessness became the subject of Jewish literature, art, culture and prayer after captivity in Babylon. Babylon became a codeword among Jews for the afflictions, isolation and insecurity of living in a foreign place. In the meantime, captivity in Babylon had spurred their creativity. Some Jew who wished to stay true to their roots took the captivity as an opportunity to construct and define their historical experience and reinvent their tradition. Myth, folktale, oral history and legal records were combined into the embryonic Bible, while the ardent discussion groups at the home of prophets turned into rudimentary synagogues.<sup>9</sup> To a great extent, the unique Jewish awareness and way of life outside their homeland during that period were the basis of Jewish culture and religious belief, which had offered the Jewish nation and religion sufficient resilience.”<sup>10</sup>

A number of Jewish communities were also formed as a result of the expansion of trade and financial networks. For instance, Charlie the Great and William the Conqueror, in order to promote the economic development within their territories, invited the Jews to trade in the countries. As a result, a large number of expatriate Jewish settlements were established in medieval Europe. In the Islamic world, Muslim rulers gave Jews the freedom to believe, live, work and move around, so Jews not only enjoyed prestige in the economic sphere, but also obtained high-level administrative positions, and by then the Jewish culture reached a climax.<sup>11</sup> However, Jews in

<sup>6</sup>Smith (1991).

<sup>7</sup>Smith (1991).

<sup>8</sup>Abba Eban, *My People: The Story of the Jews*, China Social Science Press, pp. 107–108.

<sup>9</sup>Cohen (2008, pp. 23–2).

<sup>10</sup>Pan et al. (1999).

<sup>11</sup>Abba Eban, *My People: The Story of the Jews*, China Social Science Press, pp. 107–108.

medieval Europe also faced waves of anti-Semitism from time to time and were subject to isolation, expropriation, forced conversion and expulsion. Although after the Enlightenment and the bourgeois revolution, liberation of Jews became a fashion and the Jews themselves actively sought enlightenment and assimilation, anti-Semitism came back in Europe in the late 19th century. Eventually, the anti-Semitic movement escalated into the Holocaust in Nazi Germany.

Therefore, Robin Cohen argued that the history of the Jewish diaspora is not only of endurance and achievement but also of anxiety and distrust. “However economically or professionally successful, how long settled in peaceful settings, it is difficult for many Jews in the diaspora not to keep their guard up, to feel the weight of their history … The sense of unease and difference that members of the diaspora feel in their countries of settlement often result in a felt need for protective cover in the bosom of the community or the tendency to identify closely with the imagined homeland and with co-ethnic communities in other countries. Bonds of language, religion, culture and a sense of a common history and perhaps a common fate create such a transnational relationship and give to it an affective, intimate quality that formal citizenship or even long settlement frequently lack.”<sup>12</sup>

Given the existence of coercive and voluntary factors in the Jewish diaspora, Robin Cohen held that the idea of diaspora applies also to global trades, international job seekers and colonial settlers, and then divided diasporas into five types based on the motives of migration: The British have been represented as an imperial diaspora, the Indians as a labor diaspora, while the trading diasporas have been typified by the Chinese and Lebanese. Finally, the peoples of the Caribbean abroad form a cultural diaspora.<sup>13</sup> This division differs from the traditional concept of diaspora. Except for the victim diaspora, these diasporas are more likely to take shape in the course of modernization as the world economy continues to expand. They are modern diasporas in the definition of William Safran who has proposed six basic characteristics of modern diasporas on the basis of Robin Cohen’s study of the Jewish and other diasporas.

## 10.2 Formation of Jewish Refugee Communities in China and Their Characteristics

Jews are diasporas formed as a result of their escape from alien enslavement and oppression, but identity factors vary from group to group. Unlike the Kaifeng Jews who have assimilated in the Chinese society, the Sephardi Jews in Hong Kong and Shanghai were merchants, the Russian Jews in Harbin and Tianjin sought haven from anti-Semitism, revolution and civil war, and the European Jewish refugees during World War II faced a different challenge. They had managed to flee from

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<sup>12</sup>Cohen (2008, p. 35).

<sup>13</sup>Cohen (2008, p. 18).

the Holocaust in Europe and sought for survival in China, but they could not fully integrate into the local society.

Zygmunt Bauman believes that anti-Semitism is inextricably linked to the phenomenon of diaspora. Anti-Semitism stands for resentment of Jews. It refers to the conception of the Jews as an alien, hostile and undesirable group and to the practices that derive from such conception. The essence of anti-Semitism is that the “master” group is hostile to minority groups that live in the same community but maintain independence. By the very fact of their territorial dispersion and ubiquity, the Jews were an international nation, a non-national nation. Inside every nation, they were the ‘enemy inside’. Hitler’s Nazism was, in essence, a mass movement under the nationalist ideology and embodies the awareness of struggle. It was based on populism or racism, standing against democracy and specific ethnic groups. Utilizing the anti-Semitism tradition in Europe, the urgent need of the Germans to overcome the political and economic dilemma and their nationalistic obsession to overthrow the Treaty of Versailles, Hitler and the Nazis both persecuted Jews and attempted to establish a world empire in the name of the Germans.

Nazi Germany did not only promote racist ideology, claiming that Jews were a fatal threat to all ethnic groups, Aryan races and the Germans, but also used state apparatus to carry out large-scale, systematic, all-round exclusion and racial cleansing of Jews. “An individual or a group is considered in exile when they are directly or indirectly excluded from political, social, religious or economic activities, rather than voluntarily emigrating to another country. In this case, the excluded people are penalized without personal fault, and this situation derives from a decisive change in the political environment of the homeland. In short, refugees are excluded from their homelands without subjective and actual sins.”<sup>14</sup> Nazi anti-Semitism forced European Jews to “go to every known country in the world, including some unlikely ones. A few go east, but most go west or south. Never before in history had Jews, or indeed any other people, been so widely dispersed.”<sup>15</sup> As the situation worsened in Europe and the control on refugee entry tightened in Palestine, the United States and Europe, Shanghai, which is far from Europe and in a special open state, became an attractive haven for Jewish refugees. From 1933 when Germany started to persecute Jews to December 1941 when the Pacific War broke out, 30,000 European Jews fled to Shanghai (thousands of whom transferred to a third country via Shanghai), and they gradually developed a unique Jewish refugee community here.<sup>16</sup>

**First, the Jewish refugees in China were not a naturally formed homogeneous group but are individuals with different backgrounds who had happened to come together under common external threats.** They came from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and many other Central and Eastern European countries, but also came from different socio-cultural backgrounds. They came to China via different routes and experienced different hardships during the journey.

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<sup>14</sup>Li (2010b).

<sup>15</sup>Laqueur (2001, preface).

<sup>16</sup>Pan and Wang (2009).

When Hitler came to power in 1933, there were about 520,000 Jews and 80,000 mixed Jews in Germany, of whom one third lived in Berlin. Most German Jews had been assimilated and were middle class.<sup>17</sup> The vast majority of German Jews chose to flee to neighboring Western European countries, or to Palestine, the United States, Australia, and South America. Only a few of them that had connections with Shanghai came here to seek refuge by sea. The early German Jews arriving in Shanghai were middle-class professionals. They were less religious and could very well fit into the city. After arrival, they generally lived in the French Concession and enjoyed a decent standard of living. However, after the Kristallnacht in 1938, the number of Jewish refugees fleeing to Shanghai surged and they were penniless when they arrived in Shanghai. The outbreak of World War II in 1939 and annexation of Poland and other Eastern European countries by the Nazis forced more and more Eastern European Jews to seek refuge in Shanghai. The sea route to Shanghai was cut off, so they could only travel across the Siberia to northeast China, North Korea and Japan. After months, some of them finally arrived in Shanghai. The Polish Jews were different from the German and Austrian Jews who came with their families. Three out of four of them were young people, including more than 400 members of the Mir Yeshiva and Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva. There were also Bund leftists and Zionists, as well as writers, reporters, and Yiddish drama actors.<sup>18</sup>

**Second, the formation of the Jewish refugee community in China had obvious characteristics of exile and asylum, and the common desire for survival was the strongest cohesive force for the community.** Unlike the Sephardi Jews and the Russian Ashkenazi Jews who had long settled in China, the wartime Jewish refugees had fled to Shanghai in a hurry. They did not plan to stay long. They believed that Shanghai would be a temporary refuge where they could wait and obtain visas to Australia and the United States.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, as China was also ravaged by war, it was impossible for the Jewish refugees to lead a peaceful life in Shanghai. Survival was their greatest challenge again on this oriental land.

As mentioned above, the German Jews who came to China in 1933 could still manage a decent life and had a strong awareness of mutual aid. In 1934, a relief foundation was established and Jewish refugees from Austria became the first beneficiaries. However, by 1938, their relief effort proved far from sufficient to support the refugees who were growing in number and impoverished. They had to seek for external assistance. Since August 1938, Sephardi Jewish merchants and Ashkenazi Jews in Shanghai set up a series of relief organizations such as IC, CFA and EJC. They also financed from international Jewish organizations and other charities for settling the refugees, such as JDC and HICEM. These organizations set up reception stations and community kitchens to provide temporary accommodation for the refugees. Then, a number of refugee shelters, which they called Heims, in Hongkou to provide free or cheap food and accommodation. They also encouraged refugees to start small and medium-sized businesses through the provision of loans. In this way,

<sup>17</sup>Laqueur (2001, pp. 1–2).

<sup>18</sup>Dehergne and Leslie (2005, pp. 380–396).

<sup>19</sup>Dehergne and Leslie (2005, p. 370).

the European Jewish refugees were able to adapt by practicing their professional skills, taking part-time jobs, or working as vendors. By February 1943, when the Japanese declared the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees in Hongkou, Jewish refugees had already opened 307 businesses. Most Jewish refugees could manage a low-cost life, while only 2500 lived in Heims and relied on charity relief.<sup>20</sup>

As Jewish refugees crowded into Shanghai and the relief organizations shifted their priority from providing aid to helping them gain self sufficiency, the Jewish refugees were aware of the need for autonomy, seeking to establish their own community organizations. Since March 1939, the Jewish refugees in Shanghai organized religious services according to the German tradition, in addition to the two former Jewish communities. In July and November, the Jewish Cultural Association and the Communal Association of Central European Jews were set up as independent community organizations responsible for coordinating and managing the legal, religious education, health and funeral matters. In June 1941, the Communal Association of Central European Jews organize its first election and established a governing council to continue the democratic tradition of European Jewish communities. After the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, the Communal Association was reorganized, under the Japanese authorities, into a political entity representing all refugees, responsible for negotiating with the Japanese authorities.

These autonomous organizations had strengthened the solidarity, mutual assistance and self-reliance of the Jewish refugees, enabling them to overcome hardships and survive. Unluckily, after Japan declared war on the United States and the UK and soon took control of Shanghai, Jews refugees from the Allies were declared as enemy aliens. Following the declaration, the Japanese cut off the financing channel from JDC, and jailed the British Sephardi Jews and took away their assets. The loss of external relief spelt into severe challenges to the Jewish refugees. In response, the Communal Association issued an announcement in January 1942 of a series of measures to coordinate the distribution of relief resources: calling on each Jewish family to provide at least one dinner or give some cash to the impoverished on a monthly basis; levying an additional 10% tax on restaurants, cafes or bars and supply shops and donating the tax revenue to relieve the poverty-stricken refugees; and calling on well-off Jews to make generous contributions. These measures were supported by the Jewish community, although this solidarity effort could only help a limited number of refugees.<sup>21</sup> In August, some better-off Jewish refugees reorganized the non-functioning IC and CFA, and established a new mutual aid organization, the Kitchen Fund. The Kitchen Fund collected contributions in the name of Guardianship, requesting its financially secure members to support the poorest refugees on a one-to-one basis.

After the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees (Shanghai ghetto) was declared, Jewish refugees struggling for survival had to face an even worse situation. In this context, the Communal Association managed to continue their relief activities through

<sup>20</sup>Dehergne and Leslie (2005, pp. 385–408). Wang Jian, *The History of Jews' Life in Shanghai*, pp. 77–78.

<sup>21</sup>Rong Zhenhua and Li Dunan. *Juifs de Chine*, pp. 416–417.

the Kitchen Fund and other organizations to make sure that the refugees have basic living conditions. From November 1942 to early 1944, the Kitchen Fund provided 5000–6000 hot meals to refugees every day, and about 1000 seniors, kids and malnourished people could get two meals per day. In July 1943, the Communal Association set up a special medical relief agency. In September, the Jewish Refugee Hospital was established by the Kitchen Fund. Refugees who had no income could get free treatment there. Later in 1943, a “Jewish Winter Aid” campaign was launched in the Ghetto. At the same time, the Communal Association set up divisions on economic affairs and employment under the slogan “Economy Leading Community”, which were responsible for mobilizing the manpower and skills of the refugees, helping them to generate income.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, living in mixed communities, the Jewish refugees in China tried to strengthen community awareness and retain their own characteristics at the same time. As mentioned before, the Jews, as diasporas in foreign countries, had always distanced themselves from the host community and had remained typical others. At the same time, there were also apparent differences within the Jewish community. They were divided into the Sephardi Jews (from West Asia and North Africa) and the Ashkenazi Jews (from Central and Eastern Europe). Some believed in orthodox Judaism, some believed in reform Judaism, still some were completely secularized or converted to other religions. Besides, they also had political differences. The basic characteristics of diaspora also had a profound effect on the community behavior of Jewish refugees in China. Although they were all labeled by the Nazis as Jews and suffered from the same anti-Semitism, their differences in language, religious and political backgrounds remained unchanged during their stay in Shanghai. Although they tried to enhance cohesion in the community, they still formed various small circles.

As an autonomous organization, the Communal Association actively assumed the responsibility of raising the awareness of community and shared destiny. As its message for the Jewish New Year in September 1943 said, “The Communal Association, as a Jewish community organization, demands that refugees respect the organization to the greatest extent, act and think in its overall interest. The Communal Association will not give priority to any individual; it will only serve the common destiny, whether good or bad, of all exiles. Some people have lost their faith in exile because they have not found sufficient support from the community. Now, as a whole, we must provide stronger support for the vulnerable.”<sup>23</sup> In terms of real action, the Communal Association took the following measures to enhance the collective identity of Jewish refugees:

First, restoring and highlighting the Judaist tradition and the Jewish customs in relief activities. For example, the Communal Association established the Women’s Union in 1940 to promote the Sabbath tradition among Jewish refugees. Women’s Union provided free Sabbath dinner for seniors and those in need, and invited rabbis to interpret the importance of this tradition to the Jews at the Sabbath communion. In

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<sup>22</sup>Rao Lihua, *Research on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, pp. 163–194.

<sup>23</sup>Rao Lihua, *Research on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, pp. 52–53.

addition, the Communal Association also distributed unleavened bread to the poor refugees to celebrate the Passover.<sup>24</sup>

Second, establishing an independent Zionist organization and strengthening publicity. Before the arrival of Jewish refugees, some Zionist organizations had already been established, including the Shanghai Zionist Association of the Sephardi Jews, the Kadimah Shanghai branch established by the Russian Jews, and a branch of the Betar Movement in Shanghai. With the influx of German and Austrian Jewish refugees, both the Kadimah and Betar Movement in Shanghai set up German-speaking divisions for the arriving German and Austrian Zionists. In September 1939, the Jewish refugees established their own Zionist organization: “Theodor Herzl Zionist Association”. Austrian Jewish refugee Ossi Lewin, one of the heads of the German-speaking division of Kadimah, founded and edited Shanghai Jewish Chronicle which later became the key channel for Zionism propaganda. Ossi Lewin believed that “only Zionism has established principles which Jews accept as their common disciplines. Zionism believes that Jews should build a new community. Zionism gives this community a new common goal and assigns a clear task: to create a center in Palestine for their national community.”<sup>25</sup> After the ghetto was declared in Hongkou, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was the only newspaper published by Jews in Shanghai and its firm Zionist conviction inspired all the refugees.

Third, promoting the study of Hebrew, Judaism and Jewish history through education and cultural activities. To address the school education needs of Jewish kids, the Kadoorie family, the Sephardi Jewish merchants, established the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association School (the Kadoorie School) in Hongkou which first offered secular European education. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Communal Association took over the Kadoorie School, made Hebrew a compulsory course and taught the Hebrew Bible and its history. German Jew Ismar Freysinger founded the Freysinger’s Jewish Elementary and Middle School in April 1941, and the Communal Association founded Shanghai Jewish Knowledge School which taught courses on the Jewish history and other related topics. In addition, the Jewish Science House regularly held lectures on Judaism and the Jewish history in Hongkou to help the refugees to enhance their collective Jewish memory. For example, a series of lectures told “How Modern Jews See the Jewish History”, elaborating on the role of religion in the Jewish history (see footnote 12 in Chap. 4). Cultural activities also strengthened the religious and political awareness of the Jewish refugees to create a common sense of belonging. There were 300–400 artists among those Jewish refugees who created and performed works that reflected their secular life. Their drama, music and other performances, combined with news reports, produced shared sentiments in the refugee community. In addition, the Jewish refugees organized a number of galas to raise donations and to encourage the refugees with songs and dances that recalled the Jewish history and tradition. For example, the Shanghai Zionist Organization organized many performances and the Maccabi events to spread the Zionist ideal and call on Jews to fight for it (see footnote 13 in Chap. 4).

<sup>24</sup>Wang Jian, *The History of Jews’ Life in Shanghai*, p. 223.

<sup>25</sup>Rao Lihua, *Research on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, p. 76.

At the same time, the Jewish refugees also formed relatively independent groups in organizing such activities. In terms of religious belief, the reformist German and Austrian refugees broke from the Communal Association to establish the Reformist Communal Association of Central European Jews and hired a Rabbi to chair reformist ceremonies. The arrival of Polish Jews increased the influence of Orthodox Jews. To conduct their own religious education, the Polish Jewish refugees founded the Talmud with the help of the Russian Jews. Later, Orthodox Female School was established and students from the Mir Yeshiva who arrived in Shanghai in August 1941 became its teachers. The Polish Jewish refugees, who were relatively independent and very united, boycotted the establishment of the ghetto, and after negotiation, the Japanese allowed the teachers and students of the Mir Yeshiva to study in the Beth Aharon Synagogue outside the ghetto. Jews from Czechoslovakia set up their own clubs where they gathered often. Politically, the Zionist movement in Shanghai was divided due to the tough conditions. The Zionist organization of the Jewish refugees was once divided, but they reunited after they were forced to move into the ghetto. Left-wing Jewish refugees also regularly met to discuss Marxism.

To sum up, on the one hand, the inclusiveness of Chinese traditional culture and the mixture of Chinese and foreign residents in Shanghai provided a comfortable environment for the Jewish refugees in China, so they maintained friendly relations with the Chinese host community. On the other hand, while the Jewish refugees were actively adapting to the Chinese environment, memory of the Holocaust had created strong anxiety that prompted them to strengthen their ethnic awareness. They sought to strengthen their collective memory of their homeland and tradition by maintaining their religious belief, conducting cultural activities and organizing political parties and groups, and to inspire the awareness of common destiny among the refugees, so as to create a feeling of “collective security”. As a result, the Jewish refugee community still had active religious, cultural and political life while material life was rather poor. It is obvious that the Jewish refugees in China belonged to a temporary community formed under the pressure for survival. However, the Jews taking temporary refuge in Shanghai had shown individual differences. Once the war was over, the community’s cohesion lost its basis, so the community would no longer exist as the Jewish refugees left Shanghai.

### 10.3 Influence of Jewish Refugees on the Local Jewish Community

On one hand, the European Jewish refugees were forced into exile by the Nazi persecution and the Holocaust, but they still faced Facist persecution in Shanghai. On the other hand, these Jewish refugees still maintained their Jewish identity and religious faith, strengthened their collective memory, and thereby formed communities in Shanghai and other places. It represents the rule that ethnic awareness would strengthen under adversity, and supported the formation of a Jewish diaspora with

the exceptional cohesion and vitality. This process derived its driving power mainly from three pillars of Jewish civilization: awareness of national identity based on the Jewish cultural tradition; a family-based, synagogue-centered community network; and common beliefs and values bonded by Judaism. The common beliefs and values were based on the Judaist concept of chosenness and Promised Land, and the Jewish traditional concepts of galunth and Geollah.

The first batch of German Jews arrived in Shanghai in 1933, and most of them left Shanghai in the early 1950s. So, the Jewish refugees stayed in Shanghai much shorter than the Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews. But they had very important influence on the development of the Jewish communities in Shanghai.

### ***10.3.1 To Begin with, the Relief and Settlement of Jewish Refugees Facilitated the Exchanges Between the Two Original Jewish Communities in China***

In China, the Sephardi Jews and the Russian Ashkenazi Jews had been independent communities. The former mainly speak English, while the latter mostly speak Russian. The Sephardi Jews had come to China as merchants amid the British colonial expansion. After years of operation in Hong Kong and Shanghai, they had become wealthy merchants, mostly British citizens, and had great political power in the foreign concessions in Shanghai. On the other hand, the Russian Jews had come to avoid the anti-Semitism, the revolution and the civil war in Russia. Most of them belonged to the middle class. Before the arrival of Jewish refugees, the two communities had their own organizations, synagogues, cemeteries, Zionist organizations and social spheres. They did not live together. In short, they were separate and rather distant from each other.<sup>26</sup> In 1932, the British Ashkenazi Jew Mendel Brown came to Shanghai to serve as the Rabbi of the Sephardic Ohel Rachel Synagogue. He had also served as an important link between the two Jewish communities. However, the two communities still had disputes. For example, the Sephardi Jews argued that the opening ceremony of the Shanghai Jewish Club, which was founded by Russian Jews, breached Jewish customs.

However, the arrival of Jewish refugees mobilized both communities at the same time and drove them to work together. As mentioned above, both Jewish communities had set up a number of relief organizations to help the incoming refugees where representatives from the three parties worked together. For example, the governing board of the CFA, set up in August 1938 under the leadership of the Kadoories, had three Sephardi Jews, three Russian Jews and two German Jews who had come to Shanghai earlier. This composition was a guarantee that funds could be allocated appropriately.<sup>27</sup> According to an article on Israel's Messenger, on December 20, 1938, 524 Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai, including about 120 children.

<sup>26</sup>Dehergne and Leslie, Jews in China, pp. 378–379.

<sup>27</sup>Wang Jian, A History of Shanghai Jewish Social Life, p. 77.

Many ordinary Jewish families, mainly Russians, offered to take care of these children until their parents settled down.<sup>28</sup> After the outbreak of the Pacific War, as the British Sephardi Jews were classified as enemy aliens, the Russian Jews played a more important role in supporting European refugees thanks to their identity as citizens of a neutral state since war had not begun between Japan and the Soviet Union. They extended the coverage of EJC, which had aimed at Polish Jewish refugees only, to refugees from other countries such as Germany and Austria. They also established the Central European Refugee Council which took care of 600–700 refugee children.<sup>29</sup> After the designated area for stateless refugees was declared, the Japanese authorities demanded the Russian Jews to oversee the relocation of the refugees to Hongkou, and Shanghai Ashkenazi Collaboration and Rescue Association (SACRA) was established for this purpose. The refugees were bitter about the Russian Jews at first, but the Russian Jewish community decided to help the refugees cope with the Japanese authorities after a debate: “to delay the deadline for them to leave the International Settlement and the French Concession as long as possible and use any hindrance in any form available to us.”<sup>30</sup> Besides, SACRA also established a Relief Department to raise funds to facilitate the resettlement of refugees, and its Women Committee also distributed winter clothes to refugee children.<sup>31</sup> Again, in December 1943, SACRA held a charity performance which not only entertained the Jewish refugees in Hongkou Ghetto but also generated cash for the Kitchen Foundation and the Stateless Musician Association (SMA). The Russian Jewish Club also regularly organized performances to comfort and entertain their Jewish compatriots in Hongkou.<sup>32</sup> These activities not only generated material relief for the refugees, but also gave comfort to them spiritually and enhanced the cohesion between and within the Jewish communities.

### ***10.3.2 Second, the Tragic Situation of the Jewish Refugees Enhanced the Ethnic Awareness of All the Jews in Shanghai and Strengthened Zionism***

As mentioned above, China had been free from anti-Semitism since the ancient times, and the political and cultural environment in Shanghai was free, since the city embraced Eastern and Western cultures, which had created favorable conditions for Zionism. Before the Holocaust in Europe, various factions of Zionism had set up branches in China. After the Jewish refugees arrived, their tragic experience in Europe and the hardships they went through on the

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<sup>28</sup> Israel's Messenger, 29 Tevet 5699, Vol. 35, No. 10, January 20, 1939.

<sup>29</sup> Wang Jian, A History of Shanghai Jewish Social Life, p. 77.

<sup>30</sup> Joseph Dehergneand Donald Daniel Leslie, Jews in China, pp. 378–379.

<sup>31</sup> Rao Lihua, Research on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, pp. 171–172 and 177–178.

<sup>32</sup> Tang Yating, Music of the Jewish Community in Shanghai (1850–1950 and 1998–2005).

journey stirred up a rage among the Jewish community in Shanghai against Fascism and stimulated widespread enthusiasm for Zionism.

David Rabinovich, a Russian Zionist who came to Shanghai in 1921, conceived the idea of preserving the Jewish culture out of his hatred for the Nazis. He said, “My mind is obsessed day and night with how Jews in Europe are being systematically and brutally killed. I am thinking how we can protect our nation and our great culture and how we can preserve our traditions.” Therefore, he developed a strong wish to “build a Jewish cultural center in China, a country that is far away from Europe, from Hitler and from Nazi Germany,” and he realized that it was a critical historical moment for Jews; it was a moment of life and death. “If we do not unite, our nation will perish.” In May 1941, David Rabinovich published the Russian magazine *Our Life* which he expected to be an “outlet of independent and democratic ideas of Jews in Shanghai.” Later, many Lithuanian, Latvian and Polish Jewish refugees joined the editorial office, and English and Yiddish supplement editions were published.<sup>33</sup> The magazine covered the life and work of the China Jews and the activities of Jewish communities and promoted Zionist ideas. The magazine was a great success. Meanwhile, there were other Jewish magazines that also promoted Zionism, including *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, *Betar’s English monthly Jewish Voice*, *Die Gelbe Post*, and the German weekly *Forum*. There were also dozens of publications that introduced the Jewish culture and life, including *Shanghai Weekly* and *Eight O’clock Evening News* (both in German), and the Yiddish magazines *Our Words* and the *Yiddish Voice in the Far East*.<sup>34</sup>

The influx of Jewish refugees fed fresh blood directly into the Zionist movement in China. From 1940 to 1941, over 1000 Polish Jewish refugees came to China, including about 100 Zionists from different factions, many of who had been movement leaders and activists. They had come to Shanghai as they couldn’t go to Palestine and had been rejected by the West, so Revisionist Zionism which insisted on establishing a Jewish state by military means gained more influence in Shanghai. For instance, Betar, a Revisionist Zionist youth movement, had attracted 300 young members from the German-speaking Jewish refugees in Shanghai. Even when Japan fully controlled Shanghai and declared the Shanghai Ghetto, Betar managed to continue its activities. To avoid the suspicion and intervention of the Japanese authorities, Betar gathered young refugees through sports competitions, recreational activities, vocational training and cultural workshops. Members of Betar were organized to learn Hebrew, Yiddish and religious knowledge to strengthen their Jewish identity awareness. By the end of World War II, Revisionist Zionism had become the most influential Zionist faction in Shanghai, and became an Irgun cell in Shanghai, a secret military organization.<sup>35</sup>

Among the Jewish refugees who came to China after 1933, many were left-wingers and socialists such as Ruth Weiss, Hans Müller, Richard Frey and Jacob Rosenfeld.

<sup>33</sup>Rena Krasno, *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai*, pp. 3–5.

<sup>34</sup>Wang Jian, *A History of Shanghai Jewish Social Life*. pp. 159–165.

<sup>35</sup>Pan Guang and Wang Jian, *Jews and China*. pp. 113–114.

They either participated in China's War of Resistance in the 1930s, and some even joined the New Fourth Army or the Eighth Route Army.

Third, the quality of religious and cultural activities of the Shanghai Jewish communities also improved.

Underlying Jewish civilization, Judaism is a strong spiritual bond uniting Jews throughout the history of the Jewish Diaspora. In Judaism, a rabbi is a spiritual leader overseeing religious discipline, laws and ceremonies. But for a long time, there was only one rabbi in Shanghai and he believed in Orthodox Judaism, making the religious services in the synagogue unattractive to non-Orthodox Jews. The arrival of European Jewish refugees brought many rabbis of various sects to Shanghai, so Judaism could better play its role in enhancing Jewish cohesion. For example, the rabbi of Orthodox Judaism, who had been educated at the Mir Yeshiva, introduced strict religious rituals and standard religious education to the Jewish community in Shanghai; the German Jewish rabbi of Reform Judaism increased the attractiveness of religious activities to the non-Orthodox Jews.

Besides, among the Jewish refugees, there were many artists who had enjoyed great fame and popularity in Europe. These household names included pianist and conductor Henry Margolinsky, conductor Fritz Prager, violinist Alfred Wittenberg, cellist and conductor Leo Schönbach, cellist Johann Kraus, singer Ernst Krasso, jazz singer Heinz Korotoschinsky, movie director Jacob Frank and movie star and singer Lilly Flohr. They built professional associations to engage refugee artists, including musicians, singers and painters in cultural activities of the Jewish community. By late 1941, they had formed at least 17 bands which not only played Jewish religious and folk music, but also classical and light music. Jewish musicians such as Henry Margolinsky, Alfred Wittenberg and Leo Schönbach used to perform at the Jewish Club.<sup>36</sup> From 1939 to 1947, Jewish refugees staged at least 60 German plays or dramas and helped rebuild the Jewish amateur drama club by composing Yiddish operettas and musicals.<sup>37</sup> It can be concluded that the refugee artists and Russian Jewish artists jointly uplifted the cultural life of Jews in Shanghai, Harbin and other regions of China.

Overall, the Jewish refugees in China were a special group with distinct characteristics of the Jewish diaspora. First of all, China Jews or the Jewish refugee community in China can be defined as a victim diaspora and their involuntary dispersion had inflicted great trauma to them. The fear of the Nazis and the Holocaust and the strong desire for survival were the key drivers behind Jewish solidarity. The refugees maintained social cohesion through restoring the Jewish traditions in China, and their arrival to China also enhanced the identity awareness of the two major Jewish communities in China. Second, the experience of Jewish refugees in China is a combination of success and insecurity, which is a key characteristic of the Jewish diaspora. In Shanghai, the Jewish refugees had never really got free from the threats of war, and were even forced into a designated area, the Shanghai Ghetto where they had to cope with severe challenges. In sharp contrast with their sufferings, their

<sup>36</sup>Tang Yating, *Musical life of Shanghai Jewish communities*.

<sup>37</sup>Li, *Cultural Exile—Nazi Europe Refugee Studies*, pp. 194–195.

political, religious and cultural activities of Shanghai Jews revived and thrived during this period. Their spiritual world prospered. After World War II ended, the Jewish refugees who had no choice but to flee to China during the wartime saw no reason for staying here any longer, since developed countries opened their doors to Jews while China was still under great challenge. As the specific time and space conditions for Jews staying in China no longer existed, the Jewish refugee communities naturally ceased to exist in China. However, the history of Jewish refugees in China had never been and will never be forgotten and is worthy of further study by future generations.

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## Chapter 11

# A Theoretical Analysis on the Collective Memory and the China Complex of Jewish Refugees



As a cognitive and emotional process, collective memory draws on the knowledge and experience presented by all individuals, conveying a wide range of complex and subtle emotions. Collective memory is essentially a reconstruction of the past from the present perspective, featured with sustainability, changeability, wide dissemination and overall competitiveness. Since collective memory was further heightened as a prominent part of global culture in the last decades of the 20th century driven by the modern media and the mass political participation, many countries and ethnic groups have institutionalized commemorative activities on major historic events, and conducted self-reflections on historical problems. Considerable attention has also been paid on collective memory researches in a diverse array of fields by the international academia, particularly the collective traumatic memory due to its great potential to reshape socio-political structures and processes.

Collective memory is not only related to history, but also to collective or ethnic identity, for its most influential and widespread impact on imaginations that shape and construct the group identity. Of those imaginations, a social group's memory of relations with others remains a very crucial part. For social groups having suffered humanitarian catastrophe, memories of historical crimes are commonly placed at the center of the group identity. These memories often evoke hidden feelings like fear, sympathy, pride, shame, guilt and gratitude in a concise and symbolic manner, and provide meanings and mobilization tools for group identity and collective action. For this reason, collective memory is of strategic significance to the current international relations and extensively infiltrate into the soft power competition in the form of political discourse.

The suffering and bitterness Jewish refugees experienced in Europe often struck a sharp contrast to the generosity, acceptance and relief they felt in China. As a result, many Jewish refugees had “Chinese complex”, which was reflected in the Jewish refugees’ active engagement, sometimes even sacrifice, in various forms of struggles against aggression and slavery and fighting for freedom and liberation of China. Even after they left China, they were connected to China spiritually through related fellowship community organizations or collective activities and provided support and assistance to China. Obviously, the precious collective memory they had

on China and “Chinese complex” which was passed and inherited from generation to generation in history has become the indispensable driving force of Sino-Jewish friendship. For China, it is of great practical significance to fully explore the special role China played in the history of Holocaust and advocate the positive contribution of China to Jewish refugees in typical historical events. In a word, the theory of collective memory can not only be used to study Jewish refugees in China, but also enlightens us on how to better explore our historical and cultural heritage.

## 11.1 Definition and Characteristics of Collective Memory

Long before the appearance of characters, the construction (reconstruction), preservation and transmission of collective memory has become an important practice in human society. Such practice in different civilizations and countries was also promoted by the technology progress in culture, including writing, papermaking and printing. With the rapid development of social media and mass participation in politics, memory was further highlighted as a key factor of global culture in the last decades of the twentieth century. Many countries and regions have carried out a series of activities commemorating major historical events and apologized and repented for the crimes they have committed in history, which has become a social trend. The research on collective memory has also received extensive attention in western academia, following a new trend of “commemorating fever” (commemorating major historical events) between the 1970s and 1980s. Historical issues often involve sensitive and complex emotions among relevant nations and regions, easily resulting in political tensions. Questions of historical memory have been at the forefront of debates over transitional justice, post-conflict reconstruction, the legitimacy of political violence, the legacy of Holocaust and a plethora of other processes and practices. Among these various types of memory, collective traumatic memory has become an important academic research area for its great potential in reshaping the social and political structure and process. In response to this “memory boom”, some scholars have even claimed that, “no students of international politics will get very far without an understanding of this new set of (traumatic) memories, without a careful accounting of the multiple representations we see today about what happens to people in 21st century warfare”.<sup>1</sup>

Memory is the power or process of reproducing or recalling what has been learned and retained and collective memory is a common and shared memory for the members of a group. Maurice Halbwachs, a forerunner of studying collective memory, divides memory into individual memory and collective memory. In Habwaher's view, individual memory in most cases still needs to be awakened and rebuilt by the group in which the individual lives, and “for events that have occurred in the past and are of interest to us, it is only through the framework of collective memory that we can find their proper place again, and then we can remember them”.<sup>2</sup> Individual memory

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<sup>1</sup>Winter (2006).

<sup>2</sup>Halbwachs (2003).

is a part of collective memory, while collective memory and its social framework restrains and restricts individual memory.

On the basis of his research, the sociologists after Habwaher further defined and classified collective memory in more detailed and accurate way. Howard Schuman and Jacqueline Scott proposed two definitions of collective memory: a common memory shared by a large part of the population; a memory produced and owned by a group of people, which does not have to be generated through the personal experience of an individual. Jeffrey K. Olicki put forward that there were two basic concepts of collective memory. The first one was collected memory based on the aggregated individual memories of members of a group, which emphasized the central role of individuals: only individual remembers, though they may do so alone or together. The latter was collective memory which emphasizes the social frameworks where memory shapes and asserts the genuinely collective nature of remembering. The Israeli scholar Avishai Margalit distinguished common memory from shared memory. Margalit states that a common memory is an aggregate notion which aggregates the memories of all those people who remember a certain episode which each of them experienced individually. A shared memory denotes more than “a simple aggregate of individual memories”, which integrates and calibrates the different perspectives of those who remember the episode into one version. Those who have not witnessed the event become involved in remembering it through others’ revivifying descriptions. Wang Mingke, a Taiwan scholar in China, divides collective memory into three types: social memory, collective memory and historical memory. Social memory is a collective memory that is preserved and circulated by various social media, rituals and behaviors (libraries, statues, folk songs, stories, etc.). Among social memory, some of them are often recalled collectively in the society and become the shared common memory among the members of the society or a certain group, that is collective memory. Some part of collective memory can also be distinguished as historical memory which is presented and circulated in the form of “history” recognized by the society. Some scholars also divide collective memory into “political memory” through top-down approach and “social memory” by bottom-up approach according to the different formation mechanism of collective memory. Based on these discussions, collective memory in this chapter refers to a common memory widely shared within or between different social groups. Unlike individual memory, collective memory focused on integrity and nature of memory while omitting details and contexts.

## **11.2 Memory of Suffering/Trauma, Conductivity of Collective Memory and Collective Identity**

Collective memory has a number of features. This chapter will mainly analyze memories of suffering/trauma, transmission of collective memory and collective identity concerning the Jewish refugees in Europe.

Collective memory usually uses something tangible as a medium to embody symbolic, spiritual values. As Halbwachs put it, a collective remembrance has double focus-a physical object, a material reality, such as a statue, a monument, a place in space, and also a symbol, or something of spiritual significance, something shared by the group that adheres to and is superimposed on this physical reality.<sup>3</sup> Traditionally, the most important mechanism for maintaining collective memory is history and remembrance. However, with the rapid development of modern mass media, images, literature<sup>4</sup> and art have become important media for shaping collective memory. Some traumatic memories are also preserved through changes in the physical characteristics of the affected individual. A scar or a broken arm can often become a permanent mark of injury.<sup>5</sup> In addition, traumatic memory may change the biological structure of some parts of the central nervous system, so that once one is in a similar situation, the central nervous system will produce conditioned reflex, which will have an important impact on the emotion and behavior of the individual.<sup>6</sup> It may be hard to remember the traumatic situation in waking, but in fact it is preserved subconsciously. As the saying goes, “A burnt child dreads the fire”.

Collective memory can also be transmitted and “overflow” from a small group of people who had personal experiences to the whole society. The rapid development of modern information technology, the popularity of education and the large-scale migration of population together serve as powerful driving force for the diffusion and transmission of contemporary collective memory. As a result, memories of many events (such as massacres, wars, collective activities) are globally transmitted and even become an important part of global culture. As long as a person identifies with a certain group, it is easy for him/her to emphasize with the feelings or emotions of that group, such as guilt, shame,<sup>7</sup> responsibility, fear, resentment and so on. Collective memory may be potentially passed from generations to generations. Bernard Schlink’s novel, *The Reader*, portrays a protagonist who feels guilty of having fallen in love with a Nazi, even though he was not involved in the crimes of his elder generation and did not know that his lover was a Nazi. In addition, the elders who have experienced these kinds of events and had deep impressions will pass their memories and cognition to their descendants, consciously or unconsciously. For example, some camp survivors preserve the habits and emotions they had in the concentration camps, such as habitual fear, excessive doubt, etc., which had deeply affected their children’s personality in their later family life.<sup>8</sup> “Although not directly persecuted

<sup>3</sup>Halbwachs (2003).

<sup>4</sup>A typical way to create characters and memories in western literature is to exaggerate and dramatize, such as the widely-known novels «1984» and the *Gulag Islands*. In the western society, the frightening ideology of the Soviet communism was shaped by the image and memory of the “others”.

<sup>5</sup>Becker et al. (2000).

<sup>6</sup>Becker et al. (2000).

<sup>7</sup>Many sociologists and psychologists make a distinction between guilt and shame: guilt is due to one’s actions of doing harm to others without justified or legal recognition; shame is caused by one’s own consciousnesses of tarnished reputation or image due to disgraceful behavior or weak performance under certain circumstances.

<sup>8</sup>See Bell (2006); see also Booth (1999).

by the Third Reich, the children of those who survived the Holocaust grew up in its shadow ... those children who have never seen the SS (Schutzstaffe) have been indoctrinated fear to some extent.”<sup>9</sup>

The construction of identity is a process of self-recognition and cognition: defining the minimum homogeneous connotation or common characteristics of the group internally and forming the characteristics and boundaries different from the others externally.<sup>10</sup> In the process of interacting with others, individuals or groups construct identity by imagination of themselves, that is, the understanding of “Who are we?” or which category and role we belong to.<sup>11</sup> People determine their identity under varying degrees of pressure, inducement or out of free choice, but the views of others can also affect the self-definition and perception of individuals or groups. It’s him inside and outside the group. It is in the process of interacting with others inside or outside the group that individuals or groups define their own categories and roles. As the saying goes, “birds of a feather flock together”. This process of establishing identity always involves extending the boundaries of self to include the other (within the group), combining the self and the other as one identity, and defining the interests of the other as a part of the self-interest. Comparing “self” with the “other” outside the group, especially distinguishing with the “enemy” and leading to antagonism, is an important factor in enhancing the sense of identity. The construction of collective identity surely often becomes a competitive mechanism of interests and resources.

The special position in religion built on collective memory, and the theory of self-superiority formed in comparison with other nationalities or groups, play an important role in constructing and holding up collective identity of many religious groups. The memory of the covenant made the Jews identify themselves as the “chosen one” by God and became an important source of the Jewish national superiority theory, which led to the long-term hostility and oppression of Christianity. The impression of a community’s relationship with other groups also plays a crucial part in the imagination of constructing a community’s identity. As series of questions regarding the identity of our neighbors, friends or adversaries, or people we feel resentful or grateful, or people who bears collective guilt or right, surely are important to define ourselves’ or others’ identity.

Humanitarian disasters, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, apartheid and other large-scale violations of human rights often changes the relative status and relationship between these groups once the parties concerned have reached basic consensus on the facts and responsibilities of the disasters and thus formed a collective memory. If a serious crime is committed, the interrelated parties will form a structure of relations between perpetrators, victims, spectators and rescuers, and this structure in identity politics will pass on from generation to generation and transmit in groups. If the damage behavior neither causes serious harm to others, nor does the motive or emotion of them is justified, the perpetrator will be resented and punished.

<sup>9</sup>Hass (2000).

<sup>10</sup>Statements of identity refers to Grosser (2010) and Huntington (2005).

<sup>11</sup>The discussion concerning internal and external interaction in the process of identity formation refers to Huntington (2005) and Wendt (2004).

The victim is bound to be traumatized with leaving destructive emotions such as fear, humiliation and resentment. In the aftermath of serious crimes, it is moral and appreciated for spectators to respond with righteous indignation to the perpetrators, to respond with sympathy and to lend a hand to the victims; the indifferent spectators should be condemned morally and also be resented. As the crime committed becomes more serious and the loss becomes more irreparable, so will the resentment of the victim become more stronger, as will the sympathetic indignation of the spectators towards the perpetrators.<sup>12</sup>

### 11.3 The “Temporary Concept” in the Collective Memory of Jewish Refugees

Unlike ancient Chinese Jewish communities and other Jews in contemporary China, European Jewish refugees in China only regarded China as a temporary refuge and not as a permanent homeland during World War II. After the war ended, they chose to leave China for North America, Australia and Israel. Therefore, their collective memory naturally contains a “temporary notion”.

From 1933 to 1941, a large number of Jews from Europe entered Shanghai, and also some of them transferred to Tianjin, Qingdao, Harbin and other cities then. At first, many people only regarded China (mainly Shanghai) as a transfer station to other countries. In their view, Shanghai, which was under threat of war at the time, was not an ideal place to live. Although thousands of the 30,000 Jewish refugees who arrived in China did manage to move to another country, many of Jews were unable to leave Shanghai after the break-out of the Pacific War in December 1941 until the end of World War II. Most of Jewish refugees were also unlikely to stay in China forever after the war ended. First, they were eager to return to Europe in search of their separated relatives. Secondly, the post-war inflation and housing shortage had made refugee relief work more difficult. The Chinese government also hoped that refugees without a residence permit would leave China as soon as possible and promulgated the “Measures for dealing with Germans in China” on November 27, 1945. The outbreak of civil war in China also made Jewish refugees who had suffered from war in Europe reluctant to be trapped in China again. As a result, European Jewish refugees gradually left China in the postwar years. Many of them returned to Europe but found that their relatives were either killed or fled from Europe so they moved to the United States, Canada, Australia and Israel, as well as some to South Africa and South America.

Subjectively, the collective memory of European Jewish refugees living in China was almost limited to wartime. Although there were documents and archaeological discoveries to prove that ancient Jews came to China for business or living, and a large scale Kaifeng Jewish community once appeared in the Song Dynasty, these experience was far from becoming the mainstream of Jewish diaspora history so that

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<sup>12</sup>Smith (2003).

they were not well known to most Jews living in other parts of the world, it is difficult to become a part of the collective memory of modern Jews in China, especially the European Jewish refugees who sought refuge in China as a result of Nazi persecution. Similarly, it is also difficult for the Jewish refugees from central and Eastern Europe to have a strong sense of belonging to the Sephardi Jewish communities (from Baghdad and under British rule in India) and Russian Jewish communities, who came to China before them, because they differ greatly in religious rules and cultural practices. Although the two first-time communities have given European Jewish refugees a great deal of help in housing, funding, food, health care and education, the shadow of the Holocaust has partly bridged differences between different groups. But the end of the war once again highlights the difference.

For the Jewish refugees who have lost everything in the war, a mature community where they can survive and gain opportunities to start their new life is very important. The opportunity for survival and thriving is given by their Jewish compatriots. A high degree of identity enabled Jews to establish global aid networks at a time of calamity, aiming to provide practical and effective assistance to their compatriots in distress. After the war, the suffered refugees also naturally gained a sense of belonging.

By contrast, North America, Australia and Israel have more mature Jewish communities. By 1930, the Jewish population in the United States reached about 4,400,000. Jews in America formed a strong and active community, playing an indispensable role in the fields of economy, politics, science and technology, culture and so on. At the same time, the Jewish community in Canada also grew rapidly. Between 1933 and 1945, a number of Jewish refugees managed to enter the United States. Among them, many of which were relatives and friends of refugees fleeing to China. The American Jewish community also offered considerable assistance to European Jewish refugees in China. For example, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee had been providing financial and personnel support to Jewish organizations in Shanghai, playing an important role in refugee relief. After the war, the Truman government of America decided to accept the victims and refugees of the Holocaust. Australian government received over 7000 Jewish refugees in 1938 and it had already received over 11,000 Holocaust survivors assisted by Jewish institutions during the World War II despite restrictions on their entry. After the war, Australia also offered help to Holocaust victims. Many Jewish refugees in China followed this wave of immigration to North America and Australia.

The Jewish refugees who migrated to Palestine (Israel) often had a strong sense of “national identity” and “sense of homeland” despite their need for a mature community. The vision of building a Jewish nation in Palestine was not welcomed by many Jews at the outset, but the brutal persecution of the Nazis reinforced the national identity of Jews. With Nazi’s atrocities becoming more outrageous, Zionism was more popular among Jews. The dream of the “promised land” was awakened and the goal of reconstructing the Jewish nation became more than welcome. As Abba Eban said, “Although they also know that Jews in some countries have already led a happy life, who suffered too much and were no longer willing to take risks, Palestine was their destination. They were too tired to start a new life one day where someone might say ‘get out! Jews.’ It does not matter to them whether life in Palestine is secure

or not.”<sup>13</sup> Palestine thus became one of the main destinations for European Jewish refugees in China. After the founding of Israel in 1948, they sent representatives to China for immigration. Isador A. Magid, who served as the Honorary Consul of the Government of Israel in Shanghai from 1949 to 1951, estimated that Israel’s Jewish agency in Shanghai issued more than 7000 Israeli passports and visas to Israel. The actual number of Shanghai Jews arriving in Israel was about 4000–5000, most of whom were Jewish refugees from Europe and Russia.<sup>14</sup>

The Jews who experienced Holocaust, wherever they were, as long as they were a group, had collective memories, and one important part of which was the “temporary notion” that the current dilemma was “temporary”. They hoped it would end soon and then they could live a better or even ideal life. Unfortunately, in many concentration camps and quarantines, the “temporary notion” of the victims disappeared with death. It was reassuring that most Jewish refugees in China ended up with a new home and a new life. Therefore, their collective memory about “temporary notion” was kept in China, which did not only include hardships and pains, but also struggles and friendship. This is what we are going to discuss about the Chinese complex.

## 11.4 The “Chinese Complex” in the Collective Memory of Jewish Refugees

The memory of the Holocaust bridged the Jewish national differences and eliminated disagreements to a great extent, resulting in a strong sense of national identity, and making the interrelated parties form a relationship structure of the perpetrators, the victims, the spectators and the rescuers, which could be passed from generation to generation in the identity politics. The suffering and bitterness Jewish refugees experienced in Europe often struck a sharp contrast to the generosity, acceptance and relief they felt in China. Although their life in China was not easy, the experience of helping each other had become the unique collective memory for these Jewish refugees who often had a sense of closeness with China in the process of identity construction. This kind of “Chinese complex” was reflected in the Jewish active engagement in various forms of struggles against aggression and slavery and fighting for freedom and liberation of China. Even after they left China, they were connected to China spiritually through related fellowship community organizations or collective activities, many of whom and their descendants had revisited China.

Chinese government and civil organizations, media and Chinese people showed kindness towards Jewish refugees. As early as 1918, Chen Lu, vice minister of foreign affairs of the Chinese government, wrote a letter to Elly Kadoorie, president of the Shanghai Zionist Association, expressing his respect for the spirit of the Balfour Declaration and support for the Jewish reconstruction of the homeland on behalf of the Chinese government. In 1920, Sun Zhongshan, the founder of the Republic of

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<sup>13</sup> Abba Eban. *The Story of the Jews*, pp. 414–415.

<sup>14</sup> *China-Jews-Israel, 1903–2003: A Hundred Year Retrospective*. Edited by Jonathan Goldstein.

China, expressed his sympathy for the Zionist movement by letter. In 1933, Song Qingling, on behalf of the China League for Civil Rights, published in the Declaration “Denouncement and Protest against the Persecution to Progressive Jewish People in Germany”<sup>15</sup> and seriously accused German fascists of their inhumanity of persecuting workers, intellectuals and Jews. In 1939, based on the of uniting the unrepresented nations and peoples and improving relations with Britain and the United States, Sun Ke, the President of the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China and member of the Supreme Council for National Defense, proposed to establish a Jewish sojourn in the southwestern border of China to accommodate Jewish refugees from Europe. This proposal was discussed and complied into a plan by several departments of the National Government; however, it was unable to be implemented for some reasons. Still, it revealed the national government’s concern about the fate of the Jewish nation.

The Chinese press also reported and published commentaries and articles on anti-Semitism. According to statistics, from 1938 to 1944, many Chinese newspapers including Shun Pao, Ta Kung Pao, Central Daily News, Liberation Daily, Xinhua Daily reported about 130 news articles about anti-Semitism, with more than 70 articles in 1938, including the anti-Semitic atrocities carried out by the Nazis (time, place, plot, number) and protests against anti-Semitic atrocities by people from all over the world as well as Jewish people and the situation of Jewish refugees in Shanghai, China. In 1938, Xinhua Daily published “The Comeback of Anti-Semitism by German fascists”, and Central monthly published “The Response to the Anti-Semitism in Germany”, including comments on the “Kristallnacht”.

In Chinese civil society, the Chinese people were kind and sympathetic to Jews, especially in cities such as Shanghai, Harbin and Tianjin. William Schurtman, who recalled his days as a refugee in Shanghai, wrote in his Report in the Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai, that Jewish refugees had very good relations with the Chinese, many of whom had also learned German. Although there had been incidents of Chinese scolding refugees, he believed that “none of these Chinese had been incited by anti-Semitism; instead, they just took advantage of this opportunity to retaliate against whites”. Overall, Chinese residents not only did not discriminate against Jews, but also lived in harmony with them and helped them as far as they could. For example, some well-off Chinese would offer jobs and business opportunities to Jewish refugees and even some badly-off Chinese would lend a hand to their Jewish neighbors, who were also generous when their Chinese neighbors were in trouble. Isador Meguid, a Jew who was born in Harbin and had lived in Qingdao, Qufu and Shanghai, said that he never felt hostility of anti-Semitism from any Chinese people or organizations in China. Many Jews who had been in China, including him, thought that Jews who had been treated with courtesy in China for hundreds of years should always feel grateful.<sup>16</sup> Even the report sent to the German Foreign Office on January 11, 1940 by the German Consulate in Shanghai acknowledged, “the heat wave of migration of Jews in the past few years has not stimulated anti-Semitic sentiment in

<sup>15</sup> Declaration, Shanghai, May 14, 1933, 10th Edition.

<sup>16</sup> *China-Jews-Israel, 1903–2003: A Hundred Year Retrospective*. Edited by Jonathan Goldstein.

the receiving country, which is out of our expectations based on our past experience ... they were even received with sympathy as poor victims".<sup>17</sup>

The Jewish refugees who left Shanghai after the war settled in some new countries, merged into local communities and acquired a new identity. However, the experience of taking refuge in China gave them the identity of "Chinese Jews" (or "Shanghai Jews", "Tianjin Jews", "Harbin Jews", etc.), driving them to recollect their memories of China even after years. Due to the influence of the "Chinese complex", many Jewish refugees or their descendants who had been China came back to China again to visit their "hometown cities" such as Harbin, Tianjin and Shanghai, and to visit their friends in China. After they left China, they were still connected to China spiritually through related fellowship community organizations or collective activities and provided support and assistance to China, promoting the development of Sino-Jewish friendship. Even today, many Jews are actively participating in the modernization of China. In order to maintain contact with former Jewish refugees in China, several international fellowship organizations had been set up, such as the Association of former residents of China, headquartered in Tel Aviv, Israel, and the Council on the Jewish experience based in Philadelphia, USA, the Shanghai Reunion based in Los Angeles, the Sino-Judaic Institute, an academic group based in Palo Otto, Calif., the Rickshaw Reunion, Old China hands and Tianjin Alumni Association of Jewish Schools, the Alumni association of Harbin Technical University.<sup>18</sup> An online networking system was also available to those elderly Jewish refugees who were too frail to travel.

## 11.5 Looking for and Analyzing the Collective Memory of Jewish Refugees

The opinion and emotion based on memory often influence individuals and groups on how they define themselves and their own interests, and their will and tendency to form particular socio-political behaviors. On one hand, memory can evoke hidden fear, sympathy, pride, shame, guilt and other passions of people in a simple and symbolic way and serve as meaningful framing and mobilizing collective identity and action. It can be used to incite hostility and conflict, as well as to promote reconciliation, communication and friendship. On the other hand, Collective memory can also be transmitted and "overflow" from a small group of people who had personal experiences to the whole society, or even to the next generation. The rapid development of modern information technology, the popularity of education and the large-scale migration of population together serve as powerful driving force for the diffusion and transmission of contemporary collective memory. As a result, memories about many events are globally transmitted.

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<sup>17</sup>Erich Thies, "*Exile and Asylum-Jews in World War II and the Current Wave of Refugees*", cited in the Oriental Morning Post on September 18, 2016.

<sup>18</sup>Pan Guang, Wang Jian. Jews and China, p. 134.

The memory of the Holocaust clearly plays an important part in today's "commemorating fever" around the world considering the wide range of its influence on politics. In Germany, Israel, and the United States, memory of the Holocaust is highly valued. In the social and political environment of Germany, the dominant Holocaust memory and discourse are obviously constructed on the basis of the identity of the perpetrators. Israel's memory of the Holocaust typically represents the identity of victims. For China, it is of great practical significance to fully explore the special role China played in the history of Holocaust and advocate the positive contribution of China to Jewish refugees in typical historical events.

It is an important task for the international academics, especially the Chinese scholars, to better explore and sort out the memory heritage of the Jews in China, especially the Jewish refugees in China. It is also the historical responsibility that they should undertake. Over the years, scholars' research on historical materials, the memories of those who have personal experiences, and the work of related organizations and individuals have made the details of this period of history clearer, and people's memories of this period have become more complete and refined. What is more valuable is that this memory is presented and preserved in physical forms, for example, a great deal of research work, pictures, documentaries have been preserved at the Shanghai Jewish Research Center, the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, the Harbin Jewish Museums and so on. These achievements not only have social and academic value but also have precious emotional value, carrying the historical memory and spread through cultural exchanges.

The story of Dr. Ho Feng-Shan also proved the importance of exploring the memory heritage. During World War II, the Chinese Consul General in Vienna, Dr. Ho Feng-Shan, who indiscriminately issued visas to the Jews in Vienna, was never known until his death in 1997. Scholars of the Shanghai Jewish Research Center and experts of "Life Visa" at the International Jewish Organization had worked closely together to do a great deal of painstaking and meticulous investigations and researches and had submitted convincing and complete materials to the Israeli government. Finally, Mr. Ho Feng-Shan was awarded the title of "The Righteous Among the Nations" by Israeli government. Since then, his good deeds had been increasingly reported and even been adapted into films and TV series. This forgotten history had become well known among people and had become an important part of Sino-Jewish friendship by echoing and complementing the memory of the kind treatment the Jewish refugees received in China.

At the end of 2010, the study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945) was officially established as a major project supported by the National Social Science Foundation, with Pan Guang, dean of the Shanghai Jewish Research Center, as the chief expert, which greatly promoted the quality and level of the research. Over six years, the project team have worked around the clock to interview the surviving former Jewish refugees and their descendants, in order to preserve the oral and verbal memory, and collected a large number of documents and archives related to Jewish refugees. Through a more systematic and in-depth study of these materials, the data and theoretical basis of the subject are further studied, and favorable conditions are created for higher quality research results. In 2015, the project team published one of

the main achievements of the study of Jewish Refugees in China, “Jewish Refugees Memoirs: Their Experience in Wartime China”, using entirely first-hand oral and written historical materials of Jewish refugees in China. This Memoir vividly showed the unforgettable experiences of Jewish refugees who fled Europe to Shanghai, fought their way in China, and spent difficult time in the Hongkou Ghetto where they shared joys and sorrows with the Chinese people. Even after leaving China, they were still emotionally connected to China and Shanghai. The introduction of this work on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the victory of the people of the world in the anti-fascist war and the War of Resistance is of particular significance.

Although some memories are invisible and cannot be preserved in the mind of people who have experienced the related events personally, many memories are recorded in forms of text, pictures, or photographs, which are closely related to the physical heritage. For example, close review of interviews to many Jewish refugees in China reveals that it is necessary to study where they lived, the objects they used, people they had contact with. It is clear that exploring and collecting the memory and legacies of the Jews in China, especially the Jewish refugees in China, as well as the physical heritage they have left behind, is of great significance. Annex 2 below is a case study of researching the Jewish sites and Jewish-style buildings in Shanghai.

## **Annex 1: Western Theories of Collective Memory**

### **Cheng Zuming**

Since the 1970s, collective memory has been a hot topic for international academics circles, and its application also expands, covering all the historical and social fields. This paper will mainly discuss the theory, concept and origin of collective memory.

### ***Origin of Collective Memory***

In academic world, the discussion of memory in western academic world dates back to a long time. In the ancient Greek mythology, Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, is also called the mother of arts. Plato, Aristotle and medieval thinker Augustine have discussed memory. In modern times, human have become more conscious of memory consciousness and various memorials, archives and libraries have been springing up. This kind of memory consciousness is closely related to the turbulent situation in Europe and the incessant outbreak of large-scale wars.

The French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859–1941) has laid the foundation of the modern western theory of memory. In his book Matter and Memory (1896), he thoroughly elaborates on memory. According to Bergson, the core concept of memory is “duration”, meaning that in human mind, past, present and future are indispensably linked to form the duration consciousness. The duration refers to the

perception and memory rather than an empty concept. However, according to him, “‘pure’ perception only exists in the ideal or extreme conditions. Each perception is filled with duration that extends the past into the present, and thus becomes an integral part of memory”. In other words, duration is memory, and memory (including instant perception) constitutes a person’s cognitive and spiritual world.

Meantime, the French sociologist and anthropologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) put forward the concept of “social fact”, which refers to “any way of acting, whether fixed or not, capable of exerting over the individual an external constraint; or: which is general over the whole of a given society whilst having an existence of its own, independent of its individual manifestations”. He holds that the task of social science is to seek the explanation of human behavior from the external social facts and to oppose the interpretation of human behavior from subjective psychology.

Bergson’s “human consciousness” is too subjective and arbitrary to grasp. Durkheim, on the other hand, only provides an explanation of human behavior from the external social facts but cannot answer how it affects human behavior. French historian and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945), a former student of both Bergson and Durkheim; put forward the theory of “collective memory”, in which all memories were subjected to communities and social framework. In the theory of “collective memory”, the content about the influence of social framework and external society on shaping memory by Durkheim replaces Bergson’s individual inner liberalism. Analysis of external social facts to study human behavior is translated into the study of human internal objective memory structure. In other words, Halbwachs successfully transforms Durkheim’s study of external social facts into the study of internal objectivity of human, thanks to Bergson’s profound analysis of memory.

The theory of “collective memory” has launched an effective way to transform sociology into the field of psychology and spiritual consciousness and filled the gap between them. Its application has surpassed Durkheim’s sociological theory from the beginning, which is also suitable for the application of sociology into the study of spirit and consciousness. The application of collective memory has a promising prospect in Marxist sociology and other academic fields.

## ***“Cultural Memory” and “Social Memory”***

After Halbwachs, an English scholar Frances A. Yates published *The Art of memory* (1966), which makes a detailed review of the development history of memory in the ancient Western world and plays an important role in understanding the theory and development of collective memory. Yates pointed out the importance of “scene” and “image” in the formation and storage of memory, which not only helps to understand the concepts of “memory image” and “social framework of memory” by Halbwachs, but also helps to understand Pierre Nora’s work *Realm of Memory* and the theory of “cultural memory” Jan Assmann and Aleida Assmann.

The concept of cultural memory was first put forward by German artist Aby Warburg in the 1920s and then was elaborated by Jan Assmann and Aleida Assmann in the 1990s, who were inspired by the theory about cultural symbols such as images in *The Art of Memory* of Yates. According to them, “cultural memory” is “institutional memory”, which refers to the memory stored and transmitted through cultural symbols, texts, rituals and memorial buildings, corresponding to “communication memory”.

This theory is of great significance to the protection of cultural heritage, the concept of which is clear and easy to be understood and widely used in the academic community. However, there also exist some obvious problems. First of all, this theory tends to generalize all cultures into memory, which are the products of the wisdoms of all times and should not be generalized. Secondly, cultural memory, a branch of collective memory, is hard to be distinguished from historical memory in the aspects of texts and archives, resulting in new conceptual puzzles. In fact, cultural memory is a way of remembering and not closely related to the role of memory in the formation of the text, the application of which is quite limited in the field of historical research.

Later, some academics like Harald Welzer put forward the concept of “social memory” to indicate that people unconsciously “make history” of the daily practice, trying to distinguish from cultural memory. This not only has little practical significance, but also leads to further confusion of concepts, because cultural memory is sometimes referred to as social memory.

### ***Concept of Collective Memory***

Although the theory of collective memory becomes popular, the definition of collective memory remains ambiguous from Halbwachs. More importantly, he always confused “collective nature of memory” with “collective memory”, leading to increasingly distorted understandings. In fact, what Halbwachs repeatedly emphasized is “the collective nature of memory”, that is, “the social framework of memory”, the concept of which is still not clear.

According to Halbwachs, this social framework is a system of ideas in the first place, and then, a system of social customs, rules and legal systems as well as social structures such as family, religion, class, and so on. These are essentially “social facts” that determine people’s actions or activities by Durkheim, which means that memories are influenced and reconstructed by these social facts, but not necessarily because these social facts do not constitute a clear framework which refers to the time and space scene of memory by Yates and also can be traced back to Kant’s view on space and time. The scene of space and time forms the framework and boundary of memory based on social facts. This is the origin of the theory of boundary identity.

The above argument also originates from the ambiguous concept of collective memory and individual memory. Although Halbwachs distinguished collective memory from individual memory which he referred to as “biography memory”, he always believed that the individual could not preserve memory independent of others or

groups. The opposing views argue that only individuals can remember rather than groups. In fact, these disputes originate from the ambiguity of concepts. Halbwachs emphasizes the collective nature of memory, not specifically individual or collective memory. Not until Paul Ricoeur collective memory has been clearly distinguished from individual memory in semantics. According to him, as Aristotle, Augustine defined the memory as an internal perception, then the term “memory” appearing in singular refers to an individual memory such as “my memory”, the past that I perceive internally and others cannot perceive, which makes the individual memory; memories appearing in plural such as “our memories” refer to the past we commonly experienced, which is collective memory. In terms of the collective nature of memory, Ricoeur believes it is not entirely symmetry. When people recall, there is an internal structure of “I - memory - I remember”, when “I” enter into pure memory detaching from outside world, the memory tends to be “individual” memory; if “I” only recall the past, the memory “I” have tends to include “collective” memory.

Generally speaking, collective memory is different from historical memory as follows: first, the duration of collective memory is not due to human activities but exists naturally by keeping the memory of the past collectively. The historical memory always divides the past into different periods, and each period will reflect the characteristics of the society at that time to highlight the difference of each periods. Second, historical memory records the past, while collective memory preserves tradition. Halbwachs even thinks that “History is single, or that there is only one history”; people in the same group have different memories because of the difference of members, and a group is often divided into smaller groups of different sizes, thus forming the multiplicity of collective memory. Thirdly, collective memory generally does not have a clear timeline. It always continues in keeping the similarities between the past and the present, reconstructing the past in the current social framework and understandings, while historical memory is chronicled. Historical significance is given to the integration of discontinuous events of the past; historians usually rationally integrate past events and viewpoints selectively by distancing themselves from the past and groups in the pursuit of objective reconstruction of the past.

### ***Application and Reflection of Historiography***

Collective memory preserves living traditions and is closely related to the human mind. Once “memory itself becomes a possible object of history”, memory and tradition will awaken and the destruction caused by historical skepticism, which is due to “the confrontation among criticism, memory and historical events”. Based in collective memory, Pierre Nora has successfully awakened the memory of the French nation and made important contributions to reshaping the national identity and spirit through his work *Realms of Memory* in the narrative of the French nation.

Memory and history are not completely opposite, and important historical events are the basis of people’s memory. But some major historical events have caused great psychological trauma to people. In *Memory, History and Forgetting* (2004),

Paul Ricoeur elaborates on how to correctly deal with traumatic memory. The task of historians, he says, is to make real history a living memory, not to erase, distort, or hide it. Only by preserving memory of history completely and truly repenting of crimes can there be true forgiveness, reconciliation, healing of wounds, and creation of the future. In this way, history has a fresh meaning of existence. As the old saying goes, a fall into the pit, a gain in your wit. President Xi Jinping also says, “History is the best textbook and the best wake-up call. The Chinese people have an unforgettable memory of the suffering caused by the war and a tireless pursuit of peace”.

In short, collective memory is becoming more widely used in the fields of history and sociology. However, in recent years, relevant academic studies both in China and Western world remain focused on relics, films, museums, massacres, the French Revolution and other modern events. The research of applying collective memory to the field of traditional classics and historical texts is obviously insufficient. In fact, history and collective memory are often intertwined. The textual history may be lost and broken, and the lost textual memory will soon degenerate into a vague collective memory and be reconstructed by the realistic understanding. Studying the relationship between collective memory and historical memory not only helps building an objective cognition to the written history under reconstruction, but also contributes to distinguishing the authenticity of important historical events.

It should also be noticed that in recent years, some scholars have warned of “term abuse” and “semantic overload” due to the popularity of collective memory. Although theories and concepts keep emerging, there are few theories which can solve historical and social problems, and the phenomenon of blindly following the trend is serious. The correct attitude should be neither complacent nor blindly follow the trend, but adhere to the purpose of serving the historiography, combining with solving the problems of Chinese historiography, and finally put forward valuable and innovative theories.

**(The writer is a professor at the History College of Nanjing University. It was originally published in Chinese Social Sciences on February 13, 2017).**

## **Annex 2: A Survey of Jewish Sites and Heritage Buildings in Shanghai**

### ***The Historical Background of the Jewish Architecture in Shanghai***

Since the city officially opened as an international trading port in 1840, Shanghai has been a haven for many Jews. Sephardi Jews from Baghdad, Mumbai, Singapore and Hong Kong were the first ones came to Shanghai, mostly British businessmen and industrialists. After the Opium War, the British trade war against China, the Sassoons came to Shanghai to set up businesses, industries, and the foreign banks and settle down here, most of whom were Sephardi Jews from Baghdad. Some of them, such

as Silas Aaron Hardoon, the Kadoories left the Sassoons to start their own business. They soon showed their business talent, taking advantage of their close ties to the British government and the great location of Shanghai. With the development of import and export trade and the rapid accumulation of wealth, they also invested in real estate, infrastructure and manufacturing, and gradually became the most active industrial and commercial consortium in Shanghai. By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a large number of Russian Jews had come to Harbin and other places in northeast China to escape the anti-Semitic atrocities and the civil war caused by the revolution, bringing a rapid expansion of the Jewish community in Shanghai. Russian Jews made a living by running small businesses, such as restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, fashion shops, bookstores, etc., and gradually became middle class by their own efforts. It was worth mentioning that Shanghai was the only big city in the world that opened its doors to Jews when the Nazis persecuted and slaughtered Jews in the 1930s and 1940s. From 1933 to 1941, Shanghai hosted more than 30,000 Jewish refugees from Germany and other countries occupied by Germany and thousands of Jews went through Shanghai to a third country. Until the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, about 25,000 Jewish refugees still lived in Shanghai, the number of which far surpassed the total number of Jewish refugees in five countries including Canada, Australia, India and South Africa. After settling down in Hongkou of Shanghai, Jewish refugees formed a settlement centered on Tilanqiao. Under their efforts, Tangshan Road, Ward Road, Wayside Road, Chushan Road and other neighborhoods were rebuilt into commercial centers, and even won the title of "Little Vienna". By the early 1940s, there were over 30,000 Jews in Shanghai, forming the largest Jewish community in the Far East; they had their own churches, synagogues, schools, hospitals, clubs, cemeteries, chambers of commerce, publishers and political groups. After World War II, many Jewish refugees left Shanghai. The outbreak of civil war also made it difficult to do business in China, which forced the Sephardi merchants to withdraw capital from China. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, there were still thousands of Jews living in Shanghai. By the time the Cultural Revolution broke out, almost every foreigner in China, including Jews, was forced to leave Shanghai. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, China embarked on the road of reform and opening up, and a large number of Jews returned to Shanghai for business and work, forming a new Jewish community, with more than 1000 people until now. Today, Jews who have been in Shanghai and their descendants live all over the world, still regard Shanghai as their hometown and call themselves "Shanghainese". Despite the number of Jews in China, the spirit, creativity and influence of them have become important forces in promoting the continuous development of Sino-Jewish friendship.

The Shanghai Jewish community has played an important role in the history of Shanghai. Their active engagement in business activities such as trade, finance and real estate and introduction of advanced western business management modes and concepts into Shanghai have driven the economic development of Shanghai; Many of them invested in the construction of buildings of different styles, contributing to the modern municipal construction in Shanghai; They run department stores, clothing stores, food stores, leather shoe shops, restaurants, cafés, cinemas and so

on in the shopping streets of Nanjing Road and Joffre Road, playing a positive role in promoting the development of Shanghai from a traditional commercial town to a multifunctional modern city. Many outstanding talents of Jewish community also came to Shanghai who contributed to the development of education, culture and health in Shanghai; they also built synagogues, held religious ceremonies and folklore activities, enriching Shanghai's religious and folk cultures. Today, most of the places in Shanghai where the Jews had lived were preserved. They not only recorded the vicissitudes of Shanghai in the past, but also were valuable historical and cultural resources of Shanghai. There was no uniform Jewish style in the appearance of these buildings, because the Jewish people were often subjected to the architectural style of guest countries during their diaspora. However, these buildings still vividly showed the living conditions of the Jews in Shanghai and bore the historical and cultural character of the Jews in Shanghai. Therefore, we can define "Jewish ruins and characteristic buildings in Shanghai" as **those that reflect the activities of Jews in all fields of modern Shanghai, are built or have lived for a long time by Jews, or all kinds of buildings and facilities used or operated by Jews for a long term.**

### ***The Status of Jewish Sites and Heritage Buildings in Shanghai***

There are now 48 Jewish sites and historic buildings in Shanghai. In terms of spatial distribution, they are mainly distributed in Huangpu District (9 locations), Jing'an District (8 locations), Xuhui District (10 locations), Hongkou District (15 locations), Luwan District (3 locations), and Changning District (3 locations). From the perspective of the construction time, most of the buildings were constructed from the early 20th century to the 1930s, and 29 of them were designated excellent historic buildings in Shanghai. These buildings varies in style, which includes neoclassical architecture and Renaissance style, art deco style, Spanish style, English country house style, Scandinavian style, etc.; in terms of function, they are mainly high-rise buildings, garden villas, luxury mansion or government buildings, parks, apartments, new style Lane, shops, schools, hospitals, cinemas, clubs, synagogues, cemeteries, warehouses, offices and offices, editorial offices, monuments, etc. In general, they provide a more comprehensive picture of the activities of Shanghai Jews in economic, political, cultural and religious aspects, and they also have high academic value in the field of architecture.

#### **Huangpu District**

##### **The Sassoon House**

In 1845, Elias David Sassoon, the second son of the famous British Sephardi Jewish businessman David Sassoon, set up Shanghai branch of the David Sassoon & Co. and he was among the first modern Jews coming to Shanghai. In 1872, Elias established

his own business in Shanghai, the E. D. Sassoon & Co., Ltd. After Sir Ellice Victor Sassoon took over as the general manager of the new Sassoon business, he shifted the company's focus from import and export trade and opium trade to property and industry.

In 1929, the Sassoon House (now 20 Zhongshan East Road), designed by architects British Palmer & Turner Group, and built by the Xinrenji Construction Factory, was completed. The building occupies an area of 4617 and 36,317 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. It faces the east direction. Looking from the east side, it forms an "A" shape. The eastern part which faces the Huangpu River has 13 floors, and the rear part has 9 floors with a height of 77 m and one underground floor. It is the first high-rise building with more than 10 floors in modern history of Shanghai. It was made of reinforced concrete and followed the Chicago architecture style. Clear and concise, the appearance of the façade is to emphasize the vertical composition featured pilasters and window pillars, and the exterior walls are covered with granite, while the 9th floor and the top are surfaced with Mount Taishan bricks. The eastern facade features a pyramidal roof with steep sides, and a height of about 10 m, and the pyramid is faced with copper. The interior is exquisitely decorated and furnished. All rooms below the 4th floor were leased as shops and offices. The ground floor shops have arch doors and there are two passages crossed inside these shops. There is an octagonal pavilion hall at the meeting point, and the top is decorated with a stained glass pattern. The fifth through ninth floors once housed the Cathay Hotel, owned by the Cathay Land Company under the E. D. Sassoon & Co., Ltd. The guestrooms are on the 5th to 7th floors and divided into 3 classes. Among them, there are 9 first-class rooms decorated in styles of 9 countries including China, England, France, America, Germany, Japan, Italy, Spain and India, making guests staying at the hotel feel right at home. Among them, the 5-storey rooms are decorated in German, Indian, Spanish and Japanese styles. The 6th floor is in French, Italian and American styles. The 7th floor is Chinese and British styles. On the 10th floor there are nightclubs and small restaurants. Sassoon once lived on the 11th floor, with his rooms decorated in British style and exquisitely luxurious. After the Sassoon House was completed, it became a hit. It attracted a number of national and overseas celebrities, such as the famous actor Charlie Chaplin, General Marshall of the United States, John Leighton Stuart, the first president of Yenching University, and the famous Indian poet Tagore.

In April 1948, the company moved its headquarters out of Shanghai, leaving Cathay Hotel in arrears of high land price tax, business tax, utilities bills, and salaries of employees. By 1949 when the city was liberated, it was insolvent and took over by the Shanghai Municipal People's Government. In 1956, it once again became a restaurant under the name "Peace Hotel". In 1989, it was listed into the first batch of Heritage Architectures in Shanghai and one of the national key protected cultural relics.

### The Hamilton House

Located at 170 Middle Jiangxi Road, the Hamilton House is now known as Fuzhou Mansion. The building was invested by Shanghai Real Estate Investment Co., Ltd., founded by New Sassoon, designed by architects British Palmer & Turner Group, and built by the Xinrenji Construction Factory. After construction was completed in 1933, it was sold to Hamilton. The building covers an area of 4652.9 m<sup>2</sup>, with reinforced concrete structure and modern expression of Gothic architecture. The main building has 14 floors and 12,294 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. The annex building has 6 floors and 17,330 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, and the two building are linked together with a total 66 sets of apartments and 306 rooms. The front facade is concave along the corner of the street, with a straight vertical line only used for decoration. Above the 9th floor are rectangular monuments.

The bottom of the façade is made of granite, and the 2 through 10 floors are white cement artificial stone wall. The main building has a large entrance hall. In the middle of the entrance, there is a four-leaf swinging door. On both sides are floor-swinging doors. The entrance is equipped with a frosted glass canopy and surrounded by beige bricks. There are two large patios in the middle of the building and a garden on the roof. In 1959, it was renamed Fuzhou Mansion and managed by China Enterprise. It was listed as one of the second group of Heritage Architectures in 1994.

### The Metropole Hotel

Located at 180 Middle Jiangxi Road now, the Hotel was invested by Cathay Real Estate Company under the New Sassoon and designed by architects British Palmer & Turner Group. It was built in 1932. It is a typical Baroque semi-circular concave tower-shaped building with its main entrance at the road corner. The main gate has three doors, with a swing door in the middle and a large awning on the top of the gate. The building has 14 floors and 1 underground floor. The floors above the 8th floor is a cascade-shaped with a tower at the top. The facade is dominated by vertical lines and the style is simple. On the ground floor of the building, there is a hotel lobby and a reception center. On the second floor, there are a deluxe bar and a ballroom, and the 3rd and above floors are guestrooms. In the early days after liberation, it was used by the Shanghai Chemical Industry Bureau and other units. In 1964, the building was renamed Xincheng Hotel after renovation, and the hotel business was resumed, and then was renamed the Metropole Hotel. It was listed as one of the second group of Heritage Architectures in 2004.

### The Hardoon Building

It is located at 233-257 East Nanjing Road. In 1870, Silas Aaron Hardoon, a Sephardi Jew, came to China and worked first at the Hong Kong branch and then the Shanghai branch of David Sassoon Company. In 1886, Silas Hardoon joined the new Sassoon

Company and worked as real estate manager and later purchased a large number of properties at Nanjing Road. In 1901, Silas Hardoon started his own real estate company, Hardoon Company, at a time he owned half of all the buildings at the Nanjing Road, including all the buildings and lanes on both sides of Nanjing Road named after the word “Ci”. For example, the Cishu Building, Ciulyi, Ciqingli, Cishunli. In 1935, the Hardoon Building, which was invested by Hardoon Real Estate Company, was completed. It covers an area of 2250 m<sup>2</sup> and has a construction area of 12,404.9 m<sup>2</sup>. It faces north and has a 6-story steel-concrete structure. It is built at the corners shaped as arcs. The facade is featured by vertical pilasters. The ground floor is surfaced with granite and features a rain-shed. The above facade is surfaced with a large square cement and partial horizontal lines. The windows and doors are square-shaped. After the completion of the building, Laojiefu Silk Compan, originally located at the intersection of Henan Road and Jiujiang Road, and wanted to expand its business, spent huge sums of money buying the ground floor of the building and opened a silk store.

### The Cishu Building

It is located at 349 East Nanjing Road. In 1902, Silas Hardoon bought this land with 145,000 taels of silver. In 1930, the Continental Bank of China rented the land with 200,000 taels of silver a year to build houses. They agreed that when the lease term expired in 32 years, all the buildings built here belonged to the owner. The bank invited Chinese architect Zhuang Jun to design a shopping mall here. The building area of the shopping mall was originally 25,938 m<sup>2</sup>. It was constructed in two phases. The first phase was tendered and contracted by the Gongji Construction Plant. The second phase was built in 1934 by the Lunengji Construction Plant. After the construction was completed, the Nanjing Road side building has 7 floors, the central street building has 8 floors, and the east and west sides are 4 floors, and all are reinforced concrete frame structure. The facade of the building has Art Deco style vertical lines and part of the facade is briefly ornamented. The outer wall is surfaced with granitic plaster. A three-floor house was built on the roof of the building at the corner of Shandong Road and East Nanjing Road. It is both a symbol of the building and a road sign for pedestrians on Nanjing Road. Later the bank was unable to make ends meet because of the mall's low rental rate, and it sold the mall to Hardoon Company. The mall was taken over by Luo Jialing, Silas Hardoon's wife, and renamed the Cishu Building.

After the liberation, the Cishu Building was taken over by the city's Housing Management Department and renamed the Donghai Building. Xinhua Bookstores and clothing stores were opened along the East Nanjing Road. The above floors were used as offices by the Shanghai First Commercial Bureau, Shanghai Second Commercial Bureau, the Supply and Marketing Cooperatives, and the Bureau of Industry and Commerce. In August 1993, the Shanghai municipal government decided to relocate these offices and resumed it as a commercial building. The government dismantled its surrounding buildings that are not protected and knocked down all the inner brick walls around the courtyard to form a 600 m<sup>2</sup> atrium surrounded by open-

plan pavilions. Escalators, passenger elevator and sightseeing elevator are equipped. It was listed as one of the second group of Heritage Architectures in 1994.

### The Jialing Building

Located at 99 East Nanjing Road, the Jialing Building was named after Luo Jialing, which is the Chinese name of Liza Hardoon, Silas Hardoon's wife. It was built in 1937. It was designed by British Percy Tilley, Graham & Painter Ltd. and the World Industrial Company. It was jointly built by Xinshen Construction Company and Tao Guiji Construction Company. It covers an area of 1084 m<sup>2</sup> and has a construction area of 10,110 m<sup>2</sup>. The east-facing, steel-concrete structure ranges from 8 to 14 floors. The two-story-high square doorway is surfaced with terracotta bricks and features four fiberglass doors. The upper part features pilasters the vertical lines with the wall column and the top is stepped. The windows and doors are square-shaped, and the wall is surfaced with cement. The entrance is for the hall, the walls and the floor are covered with marble, and the interior is decorated with mahogany and imported lauan wood. It was listed as one of the second group of Heritage Architectures in 1994. It is now owned by Shanghai New Huang Pu Real Estate Co., Ltd.

### The Ci An Li Building

Located at 98-114 East Nanjing Road, it was built by the Hardoon Company. It was listed as one of third batch of the Heritage Buildings in Shanghai in 1999.

### The Arnhold Building

Located at 320 Middle Sichuan Road, it was built by Arnhold Brothers & Co., Ltd. In 1854, the German Jews Peter Karberg and the old Arnhold brothers co-founded the Arnhold & Karberg & Co. in Shanghai. During World War I, China declared war on Germany, and the Arnhold brothers joined British nationality to avoid losses. Since Peter Karberg had a stake in the company, he was sent back to his homeland. After the end of the war, Harry Edward Arnhold and Charles Herbert Arnhold, the sons of old Arnhold brothers, returned to Shanghai and demanded the repatriation of the company. They renamed the company the Arnhold Brothers & Co., Ltd, which was registered in Hong Kong and headquartered in Shanghai. In 1919, the brothers revived their business in Shanghai and soon their company became a leading foreign trade company in Shanghai. Harry Edward Arnhold was once the chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council and became a very influential foreigner in Shanghai. In 1907, the Arnhold brothers began to build Arnhold Building at the junction of Jiujiang Road and Middle Sichuan Road.

In 2004, it was listed in the fourth batch of Heritage Buildings.

### Bong Street Clothes Shop

In 1935, German Jew Lissein came to Shanghai from Germany to escape the persecution of the Nazis. He opened a high-end women clothes shop Bong-Street Store on the 2nd floor of Taixing Building (61 Nanjing Road. Street). Some foreigners in Shanghai have become frequent customers to the shop, and some literary and arts celebrities also often visited the shop. After the end of World War II, he sold the shop to the foreman Zhang Xinyuan and Zhang Gentao for 5000 yuan. After the liberation of Shanghai, high-end fashion shops that used to serve foreigners, bureaucrats, and other upper-class people were closed down. “Bong Street” was relocated to the stairwell of the 20 m<sup>2</sup> at the bottom of the Cathy Hotel (now Peace Hotel), and it relied on processing cashmere garment that exported to the Soviet Union to stay afloat. After the establishment of the Shanghai Garment Company in 1956, the shop moved to 154 East Nanjing Road and expanded the business premises. In December 1993, The Bong Street Clothes Company was founded.

### Jing'an District

#### The Kadoorie Villa

At the end of the 19th century, the British Jewish businessman Sir Elly Kadoorie started his business in Hong Kong and Shanghai, and invested in construction, real estate, electric power utilities, rubber plantations, and banking. In 1926, he founded the Elly Kadoorie Society and the Shanghai Lung Tuberculosis Hospital and other charitable causes and was made an Honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire. By the 1930s, the Kadoorie family's business continued to expand and became a famous wealthy Jewish merchant in Shanghai along with the Sassoons and Silas Aaron Hardoon.

In 1919, the Kadoories' original house on today's South Huangpi Road was caught in a fire. His wife Laura Mocata died when rescuing a female teacher trapped in the house. Sir Kadoorie was distraught by her death, and he took his two sons to London for a temporary stay. Before he left, he invited his friend and architect Rahan Brown to build a new house in Great Western Road (today 64 West Yan'an Road). Rahan Brown indulged himself in alcoholism and handed over the new home to Si Jinsheng, a designer of the British architectural firm of Moorhead & Halse. The new house cost a total of 1 million taels of silver and completed construction in 1924. It covers an area of 830 m<sup>2</sup>, and a building area of 3940 m<sup>2</sup>. Two-story mixed structure of brick, wood and stone, symmetrical layout, pseudo-classic style. The standard Ionian-style porch colonnade sits at the central entrance of the garden. The interior and exterior walls and floors of the building are almost covered with Italian marble, so it is also called the “Marble Palace”. There are more than 20 rooms in the building. On the ground floor there is a ballroom which can host 800 people and a restaurant which can host nearly 100 people. The restaurant is nearly 20 m high and covers an area of nearly 400 m<sup>2</sup>. The interior decoration is modeled after the 18th century European court

style. It is extremely splendid: its doors are exquisitely crafted and painted in bronze patterns; the interior walls are decorated with gold foil; the roof is decorated with plaster patterns; the color patterns are different; the top of the hall is made of marble and the surrounding walls are engraved with marble, and eight glass chandeliers are hung on the top. The floor of the hall is covered with marble, and the middle part is made of teak pattern floor; the stairs are all made of marble with teak handrails and copper railings. The large garden outside the marble palace is full of flowers and green trees. On the southern lawn, there were horse stables, deer cubs, tennis courts, and heating gardens.

After the liberation, the Kadoories ended their business in Shanghai and moved to Hong Kong. As proposed by Madam Soong Ching-Ling on May 31, 1953, the Shanghai Municipal Government announced that it would use the “Marble Palace” as the China Welfare Institute Children’s Palace, and then later it built a science and technology building, an amusement park, the Little theater, and the celestial museum. In 1989, it was listed in the first group of Heritage Buildings in Shanghai.

### The Moller Villa

British Jew Eric Moller came to Shanghai in 1919 empty-handed and made his fortune here by winning bets on the horse races. He was chairman of the Shanghai Horse Racing Club. In 1930, he bought a land at Yarppe Road (now 30 Shanxi South Road) and built the villa. In 1936, the villa was completed. With the base area of 5269 m<sup>2</sup>, it covers an area of 1396 m<sup>2</sup> and the total construction area is 3132 m<sup>2</sup>. The main building is a brick and wood structure, covering an area of 894 m<sup>2</sup> and a building area of 2411 m<sup>2</sup>. The family lived at 3 floors, with a total of 106 rooms of various sizes. The lawn garden on the south side of the house is about 2200 m<sup>2</sup>.

The overall style of the building reflects the Scandinavian style of Northern Europe. At that time, it was unique since almost all other foreign buildings in Shanghai were of Western European style, therefore it is an important historic site in the history of modern buildings in Shanghai. On both sides of the main building, there are four-slope top towers with different heights, sleek shapes and fine decoration. The east tower is nearly 20 m high, and the west tower is about 25 m high. The four slopes on the top of the tower have bay windows and plastic ornaments. The top surface of the tower is covered with blue aluminum tile. Behind the top of the east tower there is a small spire with a stained-glass roof. These high and steep roofs reflect the architectural features of the Nordic houses in high latitudes, designed to withstand the cold winds and reduce the snow area, while the villa was designed to be aesthetically pleasing. The south façade of the main building has three double-sloping roofs and four cusp bay windows, which are intertwined with the three four-slope spires on the east and west and are shaped like a magnificent little palace. The wooden components at the top of the double slopes are clearly exposed and the white ash is wiped between these components. This is typical style of Nordic country houses. The exterior wall of the main building is covered with Taishan bricks, and the surrounding walls are made of imported refractory bricks, and the roof is made of yellow and green glazed

tiles. The entrance of the house, the foyer and the staircase have the Baroque charm. The interior decoration of the main building is exquisite, and the wall planks are inlaid into various patterns and colored. The wooden flat top is finely carved and painted. In addition, the wainscoting, alcove, door frames and escalator railings of the aisles in the hallway are decorated with a wide variety of carved or laminated feet, and the bottom of the escalator is also made of carved wooden flat tops. The escalators in the building are tumbling up and down, and even the rooms on the same floor are often accessed by going up and down stairs. In addition, the indoor dome is equipped with stained glass allows the passage of light into the room, creating a fairy-tale scene. The floor of flower houses and grape houses in the courtyard are tiled and covered with yellow glass tops and inlaid with various patterns. The yard also houses the “dog graves” and “monkey storks” with bronze horse statues and marble monuments. This commemorates Eric Moller’s early career in horse racing and dog racing.

In 1950, the house was used as office of the Municipal Committee of the Communist Youth League. In 1989, it was listed into the first group of Heritage Architectures in Shanghai. In January 2001, after the League’s municipal committee moved out, Shanghai Hengshan (Group) Co., Ltd. took over the villa and transformed it into a small boutique hotel. It was officially reopened in May 2002 with the name of Hengshan Moller Villa Hotel.

### Ohel Rachel Synagogue

In 1916, shortly after the death of Sir Jacob Sassoon, the Sephardi Jewish community in Shanghai used his bequest to commemorate his dead wife built the Ohel Rachel Synagogue at Seymour Road (now 500 North Shaanxi Road). The synagogue was named after Jacob Sassoon’s late wife, Rachel. It was designed by the Shanghai firm of Robert Bradshaw Moorhead and Sidney Joseph Halse and was completed in 1920. It was the largest synagogue in the Far East. The whole building is rectangular, with a brick-concrete structure of 3 floors, a total construction area of 1115 m<sup>2</sup> and a green area of 3500 m<sup>2</sup>. The overall architectural style is the neoclassical Greek temple style, but in the architectural details such as the partial door trims, window caves, halls, four-run buildings, beam pillars, etc., it shows strong Jewish architectural features. The main entrance of the south gate is divided into two sections: a pair of Ioni columns and a pair of square pilasters forming a porch, and three arched gates. The semi-elliptical central platform for church worship service on the first floor of the synagogue is built with marble was flanked by marble pillars. The roof is a vaulted ceiling, five arc-shaped beams support the ceiling, and the surrounding windows are all composed of five fans, which symbolize the “Five Books of Moses”. Its walk-in ark held Five Books of Moses. The two sides of the hall are double-column colonnades, and the small vaults between the columns intersect perpendicularly to the roof. The second floor of the hall is also made of white marble. According to the Jewish orthodoxy, this place is dedicated to female worshippers. On the top floor of the synagogue is a balcony, with aquarius railing. The flat top of the hall was originally a spire. It was

demolished during the Cultural Revolution and is now replaced by a cement flat roof. The interior of the synagogue remains almost an original architectural form, except for four large chandeliers which was once destroyed. The building is now the office of the Municipal Education Bureau. It was listed as one of second group of Heritage Architectures in Shanghai in 1994.

Two Israeli presidents and four Israeli prime ministers, he former First Lady of the United States Hillary Clinton, and the US Secretary of State Albright, and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder visited the synagogue.

### The Jewish Club Building

It is located at 702-722 Nanjing West Road. Built in 1930, it covers an area of 4093 m<sup>2</sup> and has a building area of 4060 m<sup>2</sup>. The Jewish Club building is a North-facing, brick and concrete composite structure of Renaissance style. The front facade is in the shape of Chinese character “shan”, and the center entrance hall protrudes. There is a porch in front of it and it is supported by stone columns. On both sides, Tuscan columns are used to hold up front porches. There are windows on both sides. The second floor recedes into a terrace with rectangular door and windows. Low slope roof is hipped with red flat tile, fake stone on the bottom, and the second floor is surfaced with red brick. There is a ballroom with sprung dance floor on the second floor. In 1994, it was classified as one of second group of Heritage Architectures.

### Shanghai Yucai High School

In 1902, Eli Kadoorie founded the Elly Kadoorie Society on Baike Road (now Fengyang Road) and was the principal. The society recruits a hundred young students and offered Chinese and English language classes. It is built mainly for training the translators for foreign companies, factories, and the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC). Around 1910, SMC intended to open an ordinary school for the children of tax-paying Chinese. Kadoorie expressed his willingness to the SMC that he would like to transform the original Yucai Shushe into SMC school. To this end, he bought 10 mu of land at the juncture of Shanaiguan Road and Khade Road (now Shimen 2nd Road), built a 3-story school building with 15 classrooms and a playground. In 1912, it was relocated to 445 Shanaiguan Road and named “Yucai School of Shanghai Municipal Council”. Tao Wei (K. G. Dowie) served as the principal. One-third of the teachers were Westerners and 300 boys were enrolled. Except for the Chinese language and Chinese history and geography, all subjects were taught in English. In 1939, the school became a full-time middle school with a six-year program. In 1941, it was renamed Shanghai Special City Yucai Middle School. In 1945, it was renamed Shanghai Yucai Middle School. In June 1949, the Shanghai Military Commission took over the school. In the following year, it started to accept girls. In 1953, it was listed as one of the 10 key schools in Shanghai. On September 1, 1998, it moved to current address in Jiading district.

### Siwen Li

At the beginning of the 20th century, the burial ground in the northeastern area of the public concession was turned into a Guangzhao Cemetery. In 1914, the land was sold to a British Jewish woman and residential buildings began to be built here. In 1920, more than 700 buildings were built and the area was named Xinkang Li. Later it was owned by the S. E. Shahmoon & Co. and its name was changed to Siwen Li. It is divided by Datian Road into east and west sections. East section has 13 rows of houses, with 17–24 buildings in each row; and west section has 11 rows of houses (now 632-712 Xinza Road), with 16–23 buildings in each rows. The inner houses are arranged in a European style, with three surrounding layouts. They are built in the late Shikumen old buildings. Most of the houses are single rooms. The two ends of the unit are two one-box types, and Shikumen first half of the door. The round mountain flower is decorated, there are oblate vouchers on the window and there are red brick carvings under the window. In 1992, all houses here were demolished and the area was converted into a modern commercial and residential area because it was overpopulated and damaged.

### Carlton Apartment

In 1934, Yeguang Land Company invested by the Sassoon Company built an apartment at Park Road (now Huanghe Road). It was designed and supervised by Keys & Dowdeswell. The apartment was completed in 1935 and was named “Carlton Apartment” because it is near to Carlton Theater. The main building has 11 floors and street-facing has 7 floors. The lower floors were shops. Upper floors are high-end apartments a single room or several rooms. There are balconies in the street-facing facade. Upon completion, the interior floors were all covered with lauan wood and equipped with advanced sanitary equipment. There are many bronze handles, locks, and emblems in the apartment. It has four stairs for different levels of people to use. There are 25 suites on each floor, and the floors are carpeted in an S-shaped hallway. In 1956, it was taken over by the Housing Management Department. At that time, the Carlton Theatre was renamed the “Yangtze River Theater” and the apartment was renamed “Yangtze River Apartment”. After 1974, the main building was raised to 13 stories and the street-facing part was raise to 8 floors. The writer Zhang Ailing lived here before she left Shanghai.

### First Siberia Fur Goods Store

In 1935, the Russian Jewish businessman Gregori Klebanov opened the famous First Siberia fur store at 1172-1174 Jing'an Temple Road (now Nanjing West Road). Since then, two branches have been opened at 1151 Jing'an Temple Road and 895 Avenue Joffre. It has become the most famous store for handling high-end leather goods in Shanghai. It was also one of the largest foreign companies in Shanghai at that time.

After the liberation, the First Siberia Fur store was renamed Oriental Fur Shop and Oriental Fur Garment Factory. In 1985, its original name was restored.

### **Luwan District (Now Merged into Huangpu District)**

#### **The Cathay Mansion**

Located at 189 Changle Road, it was the property of the Cathay Land Company built by the Sassoons in 1929. It was designed by Palmer & Turner Group and built by Xinsunji Construction Company. It is a Gothic architecture and resembles British castle. It is a steel framed and concrete structure with a building area of 21,202 m<sup>2</sup>. A total of 13 floors, 57 m high, it used to be the tallest building in Shanghai, and also known as the 13-story building. There are 7 elevators, 4 of which are used for guests. The 1st to 10th floors are guestrooms, each with 12 single rooms and 8 suites, each with independent sanitary equipment, 11th and 12th floors are restaurants, the top floor is the kitchen. The whole hotel house many functioning rooms such as the service room and storage room. The front facade is flat and decorated with brown bricks. The most prominent facade is the grid steel window arrangement, the window file outside the mouth with a white fake stone surface. The entire building is Georgian style architecture with Art Deco decorations. In 1951, Jinjiang Sichuan Restaurant, which was opened in 1935 by female entrepreneur Dong Zhujun, and later the Jinjiang Tea House, were moved into the Cathay Mansion, which became the north building of Jinjiang Hotel. In 1989, it was listed into the first group of Best Historical Buildings in Shanghai.

#### **The Grosvenor House**

Also known as the Junling House or the Maoming House, it is located at 65-125 Maoming South Road. In 1931, after making a huge profit from the Cathay Mansion, the New Saseoon Company commissioned Palmer & Turner Group and Xinsinji Construction Company to build a 19-story house on the open ground in the south. The House was completed in 1934. It has a floor space of 23,985 m<sup>2</sup>. It is arc-shaped and features three connected parts. The middle high-rise is 19 floors and 68 m high. On both sides sits wing building of Grosvenor House. The ground floor is all storage rooms, and second and above floors are apartment-style rooms with a total of 77 units. There are 6 elevators and 4 of them are passenger elevators. The first floor is for storage rooms, and second and above floors are apartment-style rooms There are 78 apartments with 2-6 rooms in each apartment. There are 4 passenger elevators and 2 cargo elevators. Inspired by the popular American skyscraper style, it follows Art Deco style. The façade is of simple style. The wall is covered with fireproof brown bricks and decorated with vertical lines. The entrance is decorated with marble. The former Grosvenor House is now one of the two main buildings of Jinjiang Hotel. In 1989, it was listed in the first batch of Heritage Buildings in Shanghai.

### The Verdun Garden

Located at 39-45 Shaanxi South Road, it is also known as the Beverly Garden. In 1925, the Cathay Land Company commissioned the British Algar and Co. to build the Garden in three phases. It was completed in 1929. The building area is 18,916 m<sup>2</sup>. The area is divided into 7 rows in total, with a total of 129 apartments of two-storey houses with brick and wood structure. The houses are divided into front and rear sections. The staircase is cleverly designed. The main staircase is in the “1” shape along the wall in the living room. The lower part is suitable for the small storage room in the kitchen. The upper space is used as the small cabinet in the bedroom, and the auxiliary stairs are set in the kitchen. Using the characteristics of high indoor and outdoor floor height difference, the floor of the kitchen is lowered, the floor of the second floor of the bathroom rises, and the upper part of the kitchen forms a mezzanine, so that the two-story building has three layers of space, which becomes the use of the plane and space for architectural design. Handle better examples. The overall layout is Spanish style terraced housing, reflecting the architectural style of modern European-style residential houses. It is compact, comfortable, chic, spacious and bright. It is a typical building in the development of residential buildings in Shanghai and the construction of new garden-style houses. It was announced Excellent Historical Building in 2004.

### Xuhui District

#### The Shang-Fang Garden

Located at No. 4-77, Lane 1285, Huaihai Middle Road, Xuhui District, it is adjacent to the Xinkang Garden to the east. It covers an area of 26,633 m<sup>2</sup> and has a building area of 23,733 m<sup>2</sup>. It was a residence area designed by the British architectural firm Moorhead & Halse and built in 1941. Before 1916, it was a private garden of a British Jew, and it is a typical western garden with lawns, fountains and small villas. In 1933, the garden was sold to Zhejiang Industrial Bank and was used to build houses for its employees. Because of the turmoil in the war, the project has dragged on for a long time and most of them have been built after the victory of the War of Resistance. It is garden-style residence compound. It consists of 5 rows and 74 three-floor houses with brick and wood structure. The houses vary in layouts such as terraced and freestanding houses and most of them are Spanish style. The ground floor is the reception room, dining room, kitchen, and the second and third floors are bedrooms and bathrooms. There are many closets, hardwood floors, and steel windows in the room. Window grilles, balconies, railings are decorated with irons. Zhang Yuanji, director of the Commercial Press Compilation Institute and a famous publisher, had rented No. 24 here in 1939 and named it as “Shang-Fang Garden”. Pan Xulun, founder of Lixin Accounting School and a well-known accounting scholar, once lived at No. 16. In 1994, it was classified as a Heritage Architecture.

### Edward Ezra's Mansion

The Ezras, like many other Sephardi merchants, started their business in Shanghai of the opium trade. Later, it turned to real estate investment and established the Xinkang Company. The Ezra family has had a great influence on the development of the early Shanghai Jewish community, especially the Zionist movement. In 1900, E. M. Ezra organized and funded the Society for the Rescue of the Chinese Jews and was elected as the honorary treasurer. Ezra was the president of the Shanghai Zionist Association since its founding in 1903 by Nissim Ezra and Benjamin Ezra. In 1904, he founded the English monthly magazine Israel's Messenger with the help of S.J. Solomon and served as editor-in-chief for a long time. In 1912, Edward Ezra built a garden house at 1209 Huaihai Zhong Road. The residence is a typical veranda style architecture in early Shanghai. The first floor uses Greek Ionic columns in its construction while the second floor features Corinthian columns. The house was quite luxurious, with "Louis XV furniture throughout, a ballroom for 150 dancers, a music room to seat an audience of 80 in comfort", overlooking a garden with lawns and trees to the south. In 1956 it once served as the Shanghai headquarters of the People's Armed Police. It was listed as one of the fourth group of the Best Historical Buildings in Shanghai in 2004.

### The Xinkang Garden

The Xinkang Garden is located at 1273 Huaihai Zhong Road (former Avenue Joffre), covering an area of 12,987 m<sup>2</sup> and having a floor space of 9318 m<sup>2</sup>. It was designed by Moorhead & Halse and built in 1934. It was originally a private garden built by Edward Ezra. It has tennis courts, swimming pools and other first-class facilities. In 1933, it was converted into an apartment-style garden. It consists of 11 two-floor brick-and-wood structure apartments. The main path in the area is 6.5 m wide and 8 small patches are 5.5 m wide. Eleven Spanish-style houses are placed on either side of the main path, and four 5-storey houses with four corners facing each other in the south of the alley. There is a parking lot in the middle section. The Spanish-style 2-storey apartment is divided into separate rooms, with a flat layout, each with 2 sets of bathrooms and a large balcony in front of the living room. Each house is with a car garage and a small garden. The 5-storey houses sit at each corner, single plane, 1–2 floors, 2 sets of two-bedroom households, and 4 and 5 floors are 2 sets of four-chambered households. The outer 1 and 2 layers are lined with horizontal lines, the upper 3 layers are plain, and the top is platform. It features novel architectural style, exquisite decoration, complete coal-fired facilities and beautiful outdoor environment, highlighted by the tall cedar, which is green and straight, creating a quiet atmosphere. In addition to employees of Xinkang Company, some foreigners also used to live here. Yan Wenliang, a famous painter, also lived here. After the liberation, famous artists like Zhao Dan and Yuan Xuefen also lived here. In 1989, it was listed into the first group of Best Historical Buildings in Shanghai.

## 7 Donghu Road

In 1921, Ray Joseph, a Sephardi merchant commissioned American architects Davis and Brooke to build a French style private apartment at the juncture of Avenue Joffre and Route Doumer (now Donghu Road). It is rumored that in the early 1930s, when a protégé of Du Yuesheng, a tycoon of gangsters, was profiteering for the contracting of the “airline lottery”, he purchased the house and dedicated it to Du Yuesheng (so it was called the Du’s Apartment). In 1946, Du gave the house to the military general agent Dai Li, chief of Chiang Kai-shek’s secret service, to seek the post of Shanghai Mayor. Later, Dai transferred the house to a famous star. At the time, the house welcomed many then celebrities and guests. After the liberation, it was owned by the Donghu Hotel. It was used by former Soviet Union’s experts in the 1950s. In 1994, it was classified as a Heritage Architecture.

## The Henry Residence

Located at 1160-1164 Huaihai Zhong Road, it is also known as the Huaizhong Building. It was invested by Ray Joseph in 1936. It is an 8-storey building with reinforced concrete structure and modern style. Behind it is a garden, a two-story car room and an attached room. The ground floor was a shop and is now office of the Bank of China. Its center is a circular wall leading way to the entrance of the shop, and both sides feature large glass windows. The 2nd to 6th floors are standard large apartments. There are 2 five-bedroom households on each floor. The 7th and 8th are skip floor layouts, each with seven rooms. The 7th floor features a continuous curved balcony, enhancing the modern feel of the building. The apartment has simple decorative lines, corners and doors are decorated with curved lines. Lamps, fireplaces and fixed furniture are exquisite. The exterior walls are surfaced with creamy yellow tiles, fine glazed tiles and sinuous stone. There are one passenger elevator and one freight elevator. Two boilers and water pumps are installed in the building and there is a garden and fountain on the roof. In 1994, it was classified as a Heritage Architecture.

## The Former Hardoon Residence

Located 199 Fuxing West Road (former Route Gustare de Boissenzon), it has a large roof and a four-sloping tiger window. The first-floor wall is surfaced with red brick, and the second-floor wall is white painted cement. Two walls are separated by a strip of cement. The partial wall has a red semi-wood frame, and the part of the wall is curved and distinctive. The chimney is made of red bricks. It is a British style garden residence.

### 130 Yanqing Road Residence

The original owner of the house was a British Jew. With a little money when he firstly came to Shanghai, he soon became a wealthy businessman after few years. In 1923, he bought a land at the corner of Route de Grouchy (now Yanqing Road) and Route Mayen (now Huating Road) in the French Concession and built a French style garden villa. It has three floors and a mixed structure. The south façade is changable and the embossing is remarkable. The composition is characterized by “double three-segment”, that is, three horizontal and three vertical projecting sections. The curved gables on both sides are symmetrical, the curved sculptures on the mountain walls, the three arched heads on the flat arch window, and the shed-style “tiger window” on the roof of the south façade. The “Mengsha-style” sloping roof is covered with red tile, a complete display of its French classic style. This building also pays attention to the use of stone veneers or made of imitation stone meteorite decoration. The ground floor is an arc-shaped porch, the second floor retreats from the platform, the third floor retreats from the balcony, and the second and third are railings decorated with flower pots. The “bull-leg” decoration arranged at the end of the column and the commonly used curved balcony and elliptical engraving make the building have a strong Baroque style. After restoration, it was painted warm yellow, with subtle differences from the original lemon yellow. In 1949, the homeowner left China. In August 1958, the Shanghai Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Center moved to the house from the 599 Sichuan Road, and in 1990 changed its name to the Shanghai Tuberculosis Control Center. In 1994, it was classified as a Heritage Architecture.

### Shanghai Jewish Club

The Shanghai Jewish Club is an influential institution founded by the Russian Jewish community in Shanghai. In January 1932, the Shanghai Jewish General Assembly held an opening ceremony at Avenue Road (now Beijing West Road) for the Club, which opened to public in August. The founder of the Shanghai Jewish Club is the Russian-born businessman, Bloch, who is also the lifelong chairman of the club. The Shanghai Jewish Club often held various cultural and educational activities, becoming the communication center of the Russian Jewish community. Every Thursday, the literary and art group will hold a literary evening, commonly known as “Thursday Party.” In April 1947, the Club moved to a new site, a garden house provided by the Jewish rich on Route Pichon (now Fenyang Road) in the French Concession. The building is a fake three-floor building with a double-folded roof and a double-sloping tiger window. The second façade is a gallery with wooden frames. The bottom brick wall, the cemented wall, the semi-circular vault door and the window hole, the voucher body is dotted with the stone spacing. The overall character is very special, with a part Nordic style. Now, it is the auditorium of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

In 2004, it was listed in the fourth batch of Heritage Buildings.

### Shanghai Jewish Hospital

In February 1934, the B'nai B'rith Polyclinic and Hospital was established at 514 Rue Bourgeat (now Changle Road), under the auspices of Sir Kadoorie. After the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941, the hospital was subject to the management of Russian Jews and relocated on the Route Pichon (now 83 Fenyang Road). In July 1952, at the sites of the hospital and a foreigner guesthouse at 3 Taiyuan Road, the Shanghai Eye and ENT Hospital, now an affiliate hospital of Fudan University, was built. In 2004, it was listed into the fourth group of Heritage Architectures in Shanghai.

### The Doumer Theatre

In 1933, K. Gunpo, a German Jew, commissioned the construction of the Doumer Theatre on Route Doumer (now 9 Donghu Road). The theater is a brick-and-wood structure with 813 seats, primarily broadcasting films produced by the eight major film companies in the United States and Yingshi Pictures. It was a place where people from the entertainment industry often met. When World War II broke out in 1941, K. Gunpo was imprisoned and the theater was taken over by Agalik, a Russian. After the war, K. Gunpo was released from prison, and continued to operate the theater until he transferred it to a Belarusian businessman in 1948. In April 1954, the Doumer Theatre was taken over by the Shanghai Municipal Cultural Bureau, who changed its name to the Donghu Cinema. In May 1960, the cinema was rebuilt as the first three-dimensional cinema in China. By now, it has been demolished.

## Changning District

### The Sassoon Villa

The Sassoon Villa is now Building 1 of the Longbai Hotel, at 2409 Hongqiao Road. With a building area of about 800 m<sup>2</sup>, it was first built in 1932 and designed by Palmer & Turner Architects and Surveyors. Originally the private residence of British Jewish Victor Sassoon, the villa is a two-story, brick-and-wood structure with a British country house style. The plane of villa is irregularly arranged, with 2 floors in the east and 1 floor in the middle and west. There is a large platform at the south entrance and a corridor upon entry. The lobby provides a pathway to a restaurant to the east and a study to the north. Upstairs there is a bedroom with oak and teak interiors, and handmade building hardware. The roof is steep and covered with red bricks. The walls have a distinct semi-wood frame. The northwest entrance leads to a manger and a drinking pool where sculptures are erected. Surrounding the building, there are a large lawn and greenery. In 1989, the villa was listed in the first group of Heritage Architectures in Shanghai.

### The Luobiegen Garden

Located at 2310 Hongqiao Road, the Luobiegen Garden was a garden villa built by Victor Sassoon in 1931. It is near the Luobiegen Road (now Hami Road), hence the name Luobigan Garden. The villa is a two-story brick-and-wood structure with a classic English country house style. With a floor space of 960 m<sup>2</sup>, it houses 12 rooms of different sizes. The building faces the south, with a steep roof of black machine-pressed tiles. The exposed wooden frame displays an oil black color, the outer wall is flour white, and the bottom layer is made of red bricks. Therefore, the color contrast is distinctive. Rectangular French windows and doors are made of steel. The façade features the balcony on the second floor at the center, with basically symmetrical gables on both sides. The wooden structure on the second floor is decorated with patterns underneath, and the windows on the ground floor are decorated with ochre as window covers, showing a hint of classicism. The details of the interior decorations indicate what the owner is like and how wealthy he is. The truss beams and walls in the hall are decorated with brass edging, and the wall lamps are embedded in the wall with copper covers on the outside. There is a beautiful cast iron-carved fence outside the radiator. All window frames and door covers are spiral wood-engraved. The house was owned by the boss of Yinfeng Company. When he migrated to Hong Kong with his family in 1956, the property was transferred to the Shanghai Textile Bureau as a sanatorium for practitioners in the textile industry. In 1990, the garden was leased to the Shanghai headquarters of Hainan Land Property Group. In 1989, it was listed in the first group of Heritage Architectures in Shanghai.

### Graveyard of the Kadoories

The graveyard is now in the foreigner burial ground in the Cemetery of Song Qing-Ling in Changning District. When Laura Mokata, wife of Sir Elly Kadoorie, died in her attempt to rescue people from a fire in 1919, the Kadoories buried her there. Following Sir Eric Kadoorie's last wish, the Kadoories also buried him in the graveyard. The granite tomb has a length of 120 cm, width of 244 cm and thickness of 6 cm.

### Hongkou District

#### The Embankment Building

Located at 340 North Suzhou Road, it was the largest apartment building in Shanghai in the 1930s. The building was constructed with the investment from Messrs. E. D. Sassoon and Company, designed by Palmer & Turner Architects and Surveyors, and built by Xinshen Construction Company. The construction project started in 1931 and finished in 1935. The college covers an area of 830 m<sup>2</sup>, and a building area of 3940 m<sup>2</sup>. The building, with an S-shaped plane, covers a land area of 7000 m<sup>2</sup>, and has a floor area of 54,000 m<sup>2</sup>. The reinforced concrete structure building had 7 floors

when it was first constructed. The first floor and the ground floor were dedicated for stores and offices, the floors above were used as apartments. There are 282 apartments and 126 workshops in the building. Each apartment has two or three bedrooms, a corridor, a meeting room, a storage room and a bathroom. The building is equipped with central heating, and hot and cold water pipes. There are 12 small rooms on each floor, which were used by servants of the original owner. The building materials are delicately chosen: the walls are made of large fire-resistant asbestos bricks, and the floors are made of hardwood strips. The facade of the building is simple and clear, with a octagonal tower at the top of the central corner. The whole building has 11 entrances, 7 stairs and 9 lifts. There is also a fully equipped swimming pool on the ground floor. In 1938, a large number of Jewish refugees from Europe flooded into Shanghai, where facilities were not adequate to accommodate all of them. In this situation, the Riverside Building was vacated to serve as a reception station for the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, accommodating hundreds of Jewish refugees. A year later, the refugees moved out of the building to the refugee shelter in Hongkou. After the PRC was founded in 1949, the building was mainly used for accommodating government officials and intellectuals, and occasionally for foreigners. In 1978, three floors were added to the original structure, making it a 11-story building. In 1994, it was listed in the second batch of Heritage Buildings.

### Broadway Mansions

The Broadway Mansions was built in 1934 at 20 North Suzhou Road. It was built by Yeguang Real Estate Co., Ltd., a subsidiary of Arnhold Brothers & Co., Ltd, designed by Palmer & Turner Architects and Surveyors, and engineered by Xinrenji Construction Factory. The building covers an area of 5225 m<sup>2</sup> and has a total building area of 24,596 m<sup>2</sup>. The 76.7-m-high building is a double-layer aluminum steel frame structure with 21 floors, the basement included. The plane of the building is shaped. On the ground floor, there are guest rooms and the public service department, with Chinese and Western restaurants, lounges and a hairdressing room. The basement is a boiler room. On each of the 4th to 9th floors there are 4 apartments of difference sizes and 19 guest rooms; on the 10th to 14th floors there are 15 apartments; on the 15th to 16th floors, there are 16 guest rooms; on the 17th floor there is a small restaurant and its kitchen; on the 18th floor, there are rooms of premium quality; and on the 19th floor, there are machine rooms. The Art Deco style building is not decorated in a classical way; instead, the body of building takes the form of a combination of cubes. Starting from the 11th floor above, each floor becomes smaller, giving the building a unique cascade shape. External and interior decorations are simple, and the exterior walls are constructed of brown bricks. The building has been used as a hotel since 1951, and the original steel windows were changed to aluminum alloy windows after overhaul. In 1989, it was listed in the first batch of Heritage Buildings.

### North-End Apartment

The apartment is now located at 1960–1982 North Sichuan Road. It was built and invested by the new Sassoon Company in 1928 and the second floor was added in 1936. The building is a reinforced-concrete structure of a modernist style, with three sides enclosed. The facade features alternate strips of deep and light colors, with spandrels painted in light yellow.

### Changchun Apartment

The four-floor British apartment at 304–314 Changchun Road, was built by the new Sassoon Company in 1928. In 1999, it was listed in the third group of Heritage Buildings in Shanghai.

### Rui Kang Apartment

Located at 18 on the North Sichuan Road now, it was built around 1930 by E. D. Sassoon along the Sichuan North Road and the Tiantong Road in a “L” space layout. It covers an area of 830 m<sup>2</sup>, and a floor area of 3940 m<sup>2</sup>. It is a modern-style reinforced concrete structure with 5 floors. Layers 2–5 are separated by vertical lines, with red brick columns up to the top. Each of the 3 columns is slightly thicker, with white cement walls and steel windows between the columns. It was listed in the fourth batch of the Heritage Buildings in Shanghai in 2004.

### The Sassoon Opium Warehouse

Sassoon's original business in China focused on opium trade. On the west side of Hongkou Port, a warehouse was built by the Sassoons to store opium at the intersection of Huangpu Road and Nanxun Road (36-44 Huangpu Road now). The warehouse covers an area of nearly 10,400 m<sup>2</sup>, with a floor area of 25,100 m<sup>2</sup>. There are four buildings with concrete structures of 2–5 floors, which were forced to stop by 1918. In 1923, the E. D. Sassoon and Company Limited leased the warehouse to Maochang Egg Cold Storage Company. In 1960, the company changed its name to Shanghai Poultry & Egg Second Company.

### Tilanqiao Jail Historical Zone

After Nazi Germany implemented the anti-Semitic policy in 1933, European Jews sought refuge in Shanghai. The year from August 1937 to August 1939 witnessed the massive influx of Jewish refugees from Europe into Shanghai. In 1938, the Shanghai Jewish Community established the IC and the CFA to strengthen relief work for

the Jewish refugees. Since January 1939, seven refugee camps were established: Asylum at 138 on Ward Road (also known as the First Refugee Camp), Asylum on Alcock Road (now at 66 Anguo Road), Asylum on Chaofoong Road (now at 680 on Gaoyang Road), Asylum on Wayside Road (now at 150 Huoshan Road), Asylum on Kinchow Road, Asylum on Pingliang Road and Asylum on Whashing Road (now Xuchang Road). Gradually, the Tilanqiao area in Hongkou has formed a European Jewish refugee community. Zhoushan Road has become a commercial street with Jewish shops, cafés and restaurants. It was called “Little Vienna” because of its special Central-European style. In February 1943, the Japanese authorities of Shanghai set up the “Designated Area for Stateless Refugees” (Shanghai Ghetto) which started from Dalian Road in the east, Chaofoong Road (now Gaoyang Road), Muirhead Road (now Haimen Road) and Dent Road (now Dantu Road) in the west, Huimin Road in the south and Zhoujiazui Road in the north. It was established within 40 blocks of about 5 km<sup>2</sup>. Most European Jewish refugees were forced to move into the ghetto until the end of World War II.

On October 8, 2003, the Shanghai Municipal Government promulgated “Shanghai Urban Planning Management: Technical Regulations (Land Use, Construction Management)”, which listed the Tilanqiao area as one of the 12 historical landscape protection areas to preserve and restore the Jewish culture. This area is characterized by special buildings, residential and religious sites, including: Baoding Road—Changyang Road—Linyi Road—Yangshupu Road—Haimen Road—Kunming Road—Tangshan Road—Zhoushan Road, with a land area of 2.6 km<sup>2</sup>.

### Ohel Moshe Synagogue

In 1907, the Russian Jews in Shanghai rented a house to build the first synagogue named Ohel Moshe Synagogue to commemorate the early Russian Jewish community leader Moishe Greenberg. In the mid-1920s, due to the large increase in the number of Russian Jews in Shanghai, the Ohel Moshe Synagogue could not meet the increasing demand for religious activities any more. Therefore, in 1927, the synagogue was moved to Ward Road in Hongkou (now 62 Changyang Road). After the European refugees came to Shanghai, the Ohel Moshe Synagogue became a center for their religious activities. At the same time, the Betar movement of the Revisionist Zionism in Shanghai provided a branch for the newly-joined German-speaking Jewish refugee youth. This branch is set in the Ohel Moshe Synagogue and operated mainly in German.

The Synagogue covers an area of 1000 m<sup>2</sup> and a floor area of 700 m<sup>2</sup>. The main part of the building has 3–4 floors, with brick and wood structure and is sitting south to the north. The building has a layout like the Chinese character “匚” and its main architectural features are: its bottom layer is artificial stone coating wall and its upper facade is plain brick wall. Each floor is built with a circle of bricks, and the same color bricks that communicate with the thickness of the two sides form a horizontal decorative body.

It has a four-slope top, covered with red flat tiles, and the exit is very small, comparable to the lower back. Inside the auditorium, the ground floor is a prayer hall. It was once equipped with the “Talmud” scriptures facing Jerusalem, and the second floor is connected to the hall. It is specially set up for the women’s individual worship place called “Mezzanine”, the third floor is the office of the synagogue, which was used to be a small classroom for refugees. The wooden pillars in the auditorium and the triangular part on the side of the stairs are carefully decorated and exquisitely crafted. They are obviously influenced by the traditional Chinese style, and the decoration at the turning point of the building is typical of Russian characteristics.

After the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel in 1992, Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum was established at the site of the synagogue. Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, Israeli Foreign Minister Peres, German President Johannes Rau, German Chancellor Schroder, Austrian President Klestil and other international politicians have visited the museum. It was listed in the fourth batch of the Heritage Buildings of Shanghai in 2004.

### Huoshan (Wayside) Park

Located at 118 Huoshan Road now, Wayside Park was established by the concession authority in 1917 and covers an area of 3700 m<sup>2</sup>. During World War II, European Jewish refugees usually spent their free time here. On the evening of July 16, 1944, the Shanghai Zionist Association celebrated the 40th anniversary of Dr. Herzl’s death there. On April 22, 1947, about 8000 Jews gathered in Wayside Park to protest against the British authorities in Palestine for hanging four members of the Irgun. This rally was the largest and most attended political event in the nearly 100-year history of the Shanghai Jewish community. On April 19, 1994, the Hongkou District Government established the Jewish Refugee Monument during World War II in the park.

### The Former Site of the JDC

In 1914, the JDC was established in New York, USA. After a large number of European Jewish refugees entering Shanghai in 1938, this organization set up a Shanghai office at 119-121 Wayside Road, sent a permanent representative and made report to reflect the situation of Jewish refugees in Shanghai at regular intervals. It also raised a large amount of donations for the refugees in Shanghai, almost averaging \$30,000 a month. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the JDC was forced to suspend the funding of Jewish refugees in Shanghai in May 1942, and its Shanghai-based officer L. Margaris was also placed into a concentration camp by the Japanese authorities. In March 1944, after the efforts of Margaris, who was released to the country, JDC resumed funding for Shanghai refugees with the acquiescence of the US government. JDC Shanghai Office was built in 1910 with a brick-and-wood structure and a building area of 630 m<sup>2</sup>. The exterior of the building is a double-contiguous

continuous-column-style verandah architectural style with façade symmetry and a central flat coupon. Only the wall bricks are changed. The roof of the red tile slope, the middle façade is higher than the roof to form a gable, with a Baroque characteristic anti-bending line. Blue brick exterior, red brick trim, fan-shaped wooden windows.

### Buildings Along Huoshan Road and Zhoushan Road

In the area composed of 71-95 Huoshan Road and 1-81 on Zhoushan Road, the British built the European adjoining architectures with classical architectural style in the 1920s. These 6 buildings are brick-concrete structure with less than 3 floors, each of them with a building area of about 250 m<sup>2</sup> and a total construction area of 1500 m<sup>2</sup>. Round arches and windows, blue brick exterior with red bricks, red tiled roof, triangular gable above the entrance. Former US Treasury Secretary, now the Director of Jewish Museum Berlin W. Michael Blumenthal lived in the garret at 59 Zhoushan Road. In 1939, 13-year-old Blumenthal escaped from Berlin and fled to Shanghai with his family. He moved to the United States eight years later. At present, the stoves used by the Blumenthals were still in the house.

### Arbitration Court of the Communal Association of Central European Jews

In November 1939, the Central European Jewish refugees established the Communal Association of Central European Jews, an independent community organization, on East Seward Road (now East Changzhi Road). Upon establishment, the communal association was mainly responsible for the resettlement of refugees, as well as dealing with specific issues such as legal proceedings, religious activities, education and hygiene, funeral affairs, and publishing the Jewish Briefing that covered the activities of the association and communities. After the end of World War II, the Communal Association was mainly responsible for the repatriation of refugees. The Communal Association set up the Arbitration Court at No. 22, Lane 416, Tangshan Road, on February 18, 1940. It was composed of the magistrate, lawyers, assistant lawyers and judges, who made an Arbitration Committee as well. In 1947, the Chinese government banned it because of its violation of China's judicial sovereignty.

### Mascot Roof Garden

Jewish refugees rented the roof of the Broadway Theatre on Wayside Road, accompanied by pavilions and dining tables and turned it to be a roof garden, which became a well-known meeting place at that time, especially for Jewish artists. The Mascot Roof Garden also held a beauty competition.

### Asylum on Chaofong Road

It is now 680 Gaoyang Road. In 1940, Jews established a refugee center in the Medhurst College at 620 (present-day Gaoyang Road Primary School)–690 (present-day Jiguang Middle School) on Chaofong Road. They also established a Ghetto hospital.

### No. 818 Lane on Tangshan Road

It was formerly known as Yuanfuli, or Yuanfu Lane. Originally the property of an American company in China, it had 82 buildings with a floor area of 7500 m<sup>2</sup>. After the 8.13 Incident (the Shanghai Battle) in 1937, people fled away from Shanghai. So, the Jewish refugee relief organizations in Shanghai could rent houses at lower prices for the refugees. All the houses in this lane are in Shikumen-style, with two floors of brick and wood structure, gray plain brick wall and red roofs, which still retain the appearance that the Jews remodeled that year.

### Shanghai Jewish Youth Association School

In 1939, the Kadoories founded the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association School (No. 91 Lane on East Changzhi Road) in Hongkou to address the education need of refugees. In 1942, under Horace Kadoorie, the school moved to the new site at 627 East Yuheng Road (now East Yuhang Road). The new school has two kindergartens and nine youth classes, with 600 students, most of whom were Jewish refugees, and the European academic system is scheduled. In 1946, the students from this school successfully took the Cambridge Advanced Examination and became the pride of the refugee community. It was also known as the Kadoorie School and later became the Party School of Shanghai Textile Industry Bureau.

## ***Suggestions on the Conservation of Jewish Sites and Heritage Buildings***

### **The Overall Idea of the Conservation**

The Jewish sites and historic architectures in Shanghai, the important parts of the urban heritage in Shanghai, reflect the Jewish cultural activities in history. The urban heritage mainly refers to the remains of historical, cultural, scientific and artistic values in the city, such as historical architectures, blocks and environment, as well as non-physical but reflecting urban culture, folk customs and urban features.<sup>19</sup> Jew-

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<sup>19</sup> Yisan (2005).

ish sites and historic architectures in Shanghai not only have aesthetic value from the perspective of architectural aesthetics, but also condense profound humanistic historical connotations, while also exerting unique political functions. First of all, these sites and historic architectures are irreplaceable parts of Shanghai's "World Architecture" and witnessing the great changes in modern Shanghai. Secondly, they vividly reflect the living conditions of Jews in Shanghai at that time, and they are also important material carriers for the traditional friendship between Chinese and Jews. Therefore, they become the must-to-visit place that the "Shanghai Jews" who return to Shanghai to find roots and visit friends today. They also become a unique "cultural card" in foreign exchanges. Third, visiting the Jewish sites such as the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and the Ohel Moshe Synagogue has been listed as an indispensable part of foreign political leaders' visits to Shanghai such as Schroder, Hillary, Rabin, Sharon and Olmert. These Jewish historic architectures have been the important cultural resources in Shanghai that play a special role in external communication and Chinese-foreign friendship. As a special part of Shanghai's urban heritage, Jewish sites and heritage buildings in Shanghai should be conserved by international usual practices.

Authenticity is the first principle to protect the world historical and cultural heritage. Authenticity is an essential element in the assessment, conservation and monitoring of internationally recognized cultural heritage. It means protecting original, protosomatic, and authentic historical objects in order to preserve all historical information of their remains.<sup>20</sup> The second comes to Identification. The value of historical and cultural heritage is that it retains the characteristics of the times and leaves the impression of the years in the historical changes, so that people can directly identify the "historical annual rings" and the evolution of these heritages. The third is the principle of sustainability. Once we know and determine the object to be protected, we should continue to protect it for a long time. If the existing material conditions and technical means are temporarily unable to meet the protection requirements, we should try our best to protect it from new damage and leave it to the future when the conditions are prepared to carry out the conservation work.

In summary, the basic idea of the conservation of Jewish sites and historic architectures in Shanghai should be: following the three international principles: authenticity, identifiability, and sustainability, a comprehensive plan covering the specific content of law, capital, technology and personnel should be designed to make scientific and reasonable conservation of the architectures possible. While focusing on excavating, collating and preserving all documents, pictures, audio-visual materials and other related materials, the value and functions of Jewish sites and historic architectures for tourism, education, external propaganda and cultural exchanges should be identified and utilized. That means to make reasonable use under the premise of protection while using it to promote better protection. In real terms, the jobs to be done include:

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<sup>20</sup>Ruan Yisan, *The Analects of Urban Heritage Conservation*, p. 236.

## Further Improving and Refining the Existing Relevant Regulations and Measures

In January 2003, Shanghai began to implement the Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on the Protection of Areas with Special Historical and Cultural Significance and Monuments (the “Regulations”), which outlined provisions on some relevant issues such as the government departments’ responsibilities, working procedures and measures, and penalties for violations of the Regulations. A number of Jewish sites and heritage buildings are put under conservation in Shanghai, while there are still some left out of the Regulations. For example, 818 Lane on Tangshan Road is not listed in the four batches of heritage buildings that have been announced in Shanghai, nor has it been included in the site of the Tilanqiao Historical Area. There is no clear legal basis for its protection. Therefore, we propose that for the architectures with special historical value that have not yet been included in the scope of the Regulations, the district government should work with relevant functional departments such as the Planning Bureau, the Housing and Land Bureau, the Construction Committee, and the Cultural Bureau. On the premise of consulting the expert committee, they should jointly draft a protection list and implementation rules for the conservation, specifying and explaining the circumstances under which the legal person or individual may preserve, protect, rectify, hold or update the architectures or group of architectures and their surrounding environment.

## Encouraging and Supporting the Private Sector to Participate in the Conservation of Jewish Sites and Heritage Buildings

According to the “Regulations”, the government and relevant functional departments take responsibility for the conservation, lead the work on planning, protecting historical and cultural areas and heritage architectures, and also provide necessary policy support and financial support. The planning and management department of the city, district or county is responsible for planning and management, and the housing and land management department is responsible for conservation management. At the same time, the “Regulations” also stipulates that special funds for conservation should be established for this purpose. From the current implementation of the Regulations, the biggest problem in protecting Jewish sites and architectures is the lack of funds. For example, many Jewish sites in the Tilanqiao historical area belong to the old-fashioned residential buildings. They are historically a concentrated area for low and middle-income residents. The buildings have been expanded or rebuilt due to excessive population in the long-term. Their appearance and internal structure have changed and even suffered more serious damage. Therefore, the protection of these sites first needs to reduce their floor area ratio, move the overfull residents to other areas for resettlement, and then it is possible to repair the buildings. This will undoubtedly require a lot of money, but it is impossible for the government to arrange it. In response to this situation, we suggest that Shanghai could learn from Western countries, and let the government formulate preferential tax policies

and absorb private capital into the conservation work through various means. For example, a special organization may be established to absorb and manage donations from legal persons, individuals or other organizations at home and abroad, and legal persons or individuals who donate these may deduct a certain percentage of business tax or income tax within a certain period of time. For another example, the “City Heritage Protection Lottery”, which is similar to the welfare lottery, can be issued to absorb the idle funds from the society and also play an educational and propaganda role in protecting the city heritage. In particular, it should be emphasized that we should put the Jewish complex of these sites and heritage architectures in the first place. So an investment promotion schemes for “Shanghai Jews” and other Jewish people distributed around the world can be designed to attract them to participate in the conservation of Jewish sites and heritage architectures. The funds that they invested in should be standardized and managed in accordance with international practice.

#### Further Strengthening Academic Research and Establish Archives and Information Data Base as soon as Possible

Shanghai Jewish community consisted of three different groups: Sephardi Jews, Russian Jews and European Jewish refugees. They had different economic conditions, political positions, religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds, so their activities in Shanghai were also extremely scattered. So this is why we have a lot of detailed and complicated research work to distinguish, identify and protect Jewish sites and heritage architectures. Taking the Tilanqiao historical area for example. When we were making a conservation plan for this area, the classification of the buildings in this area alone involved more than 300 experts from Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS), Tongji University and Shanghai Municipal Archives. According to the principle of Authenticity, conservation of sites and heritage architectures should retain their original appearance, but in the absence of the graphic materials of the building’s appearance and internal structure at that time, it is technically difficult to reproduce the original cultural charm of these buildings and restore their original appearance. Therefore, it is imperative to collect and arrange the construction drawings, photographs and related documents of the Jewish sites and heritage architectures. To complete this work, relevant government departments need to take the lead in organizing experts and scholars engaged in Jewish studies, culture research, historical building conservation research, etc. With the cooperation of relevant institutions, experts and scholars should conduct a comprehensive survey and collation of documents, pictures, construction drawings and audio-visual materials of existing Jewish sites and heritage architectures in Shanghai. On this basis, a three-dimensional structural drawing, a layout and a text description file of each building will help to establish a archive and information data base of Jewish sites and heritage architectures in Shanghai, which will provide a solid foundation for long-term management and development.

## Promoting the Jewish Sites and Heritage Architectures in Shanghai, and Showing Their Human Values at Home and Abroad

According to our survey, most of these Jewish sites and heritage architectures in Shanghai that have been identified as heritage buildings are available for public visits. However, many visitors feel that the information provided is too simple in either content or form. The heritage buildings like the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, which is not yet open to the public, is not very familiar to the ordinary citizens. Most of visitors are Jewish tourists from abroad. Therefore, we suggest that the promotion of Jewish sites and heritage architectures should be further strengthened. The design and implementation of the promotion campaign can be carried out by experts and scholars, the government department's policies, and the propaganda organization's responsible operation mode. In particular, the media should be consciously guided to increase the Jewish sites and characteristic buildings and related protection work. Reports, organize professional efforts to produce graphic and audio-visual materials, hold presentations and roving photo exhibitions, and increase publicity in various forms to attract the attention of governments, enterprises and citizens at all levels, and further expand their international influences.

### Suggestions on the Protection and Development of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and Tilanqiao Historical Area

Among the Jewish sites and buildings that have preserved in Shanghai, the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and the Tilanqiao Historical Area are the two sites that best reflect Jewish culture. In particular, the Tilanqiao Historical Area is the only one in China that reflects the life of Jewish refugees during the World War II and is the most popular urban heritage for Jewish people around the world. Therefore, this topic focuses on the protection and development of these two sites and buildings.

#### Protection and Development of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue

The Ohel Rachel Synagogue was once the largest synagogue in the Far East, one of the important religious venues of the Shanghai Jewish community, and a representative work of Jewish architectural art in China. This synagogue has been listed as the second group of historical architecture in Shanghai. In 2001, it was listed in the 2002 The World Heritage List by the World Monuments Fund with China's Great Wall and two other buildings.<sup>21</sup> The Ohel Rachel Synagogue is eye-catching for its distinctive Jewish religious features. As one of the two remaining Jewish synagogues in Shanghai, it is undoubtedly an important cultural resource not only in Shanghai, but also in the world.

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<sup>21</sup>Fuxi and Guoxin (2003).

In our research, we found that both experts engaged in Jewish studies, relevant functional departments responsible for external propaganda work, and the domestic and foreign tourists all hope to have a long-term exhibition or museum that reflects the historical evolution of the entire Shanghai Jewish community. At present, international metropolises like New York, London, and Berlin all have their own Jewish museums, which has become an important carrier for these cities to show their cultural charm. The establishment of Shanghai Jewish Museum is conducive to showing Shanghai's world cultural heritage and helping to further enhance Shanghai's status as an international metropolis. Considering the representativeness and high international popularity of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue in the Jewish sites, its floor area, functions and other various factors, we think it is suitable as the Shanghai Jewish Museum, which will be open to the public for a long time.

At the same time, considering the special status of religion in the Jewish nation, in order to solve the difficulties in the lack of religious venues for the Jews living in Shanghai, and also attract more Jews to Shanghai to invest and work, under the premise of observing our country's religious ethnic policy, after the Shanghai Jewish community submitting an application to the relevant authorities and getting the approval, they were allowed to hold religious ceremonies at a fixed time (such as the Sabbath of Judaism or other major religious festivals) at the Ohel Rachel Synagogue. Temporary closures and security measures can be taken during Jewish religious activities.

#### Protection and Development of Tilanqiao Historical Area

In October 2003, after the Shanghai Municipal Government listed Tilanqiao as a historical area, the relevant departments of Hongkou District and Tilanqiao Street invested more than 5 million yuan to renovate Huoshan Road, which greatly improved the environment around Huoshan Road and Zhoushan Road. In view of the fact that most of the Jewish sites in this area are ordinary residential buildings, how to resettle the residents and curb the destructive use of the buildings, it is necessary to invest more funds for subsequent work on protection and development. Therefore, it is necessary to set up a special agency for long-term management as soon as possible. At present, the Hongkou District Government has decided to apply the Tilanqiao Historical Area to the UNESCO World War Heritage. We suggest that the Hongkou District Government can set up an expert group on the declaration of the World War Heritage, on the basis of the above-said Regulations and the "Technical Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on Urban Planning Administration (Land Use and Architecture Administration)", according to the requirements of applying for the World War Heritage, make overall planning for the protection and development of Historical Area. At the same time, the district government can set up a special office to raise and manage the special fund for the Historical Area, and coordinate the implementation of the planning of various functional departments.

The following are ideas for the protection of several representative sites in the Historical Area:

- (1) Ohel Moishe Synagogue. As a well-preserved landmark in this Historical Area, the Ohel Moishe Synagogue will be built into a Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum with the theme of “Jewish Refugee Life and Sino-Jewish Friendship”. In addition to the existing exhibits, multimedia can be used to re-segment and arrange the exhibition space of the hall, and the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Association and other organizations can collect exhibits from the Shanghai Jewish refugees to expand the contents of the exhibition. At the same time, this Refugee Museum can also establish cooperative relations with some famous museums at home and abroad such as the Memorial Hall of the Victims in Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders in China, Jewish Museum Berlin and Berlin Holocaust Memorial in Germany, Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, Israel, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and invite them to exhibit in the hall.
- (2) JDC Office. It is recommended to apply for Shanghai municipal construction protection units. We can restore its historical appearance and turn it into a sub-exhibition hall of the Ohel Moishe Synagogue.
- (3) Mascot Roof Garden. At present, this place is full of debris, no longer the lively scene of the year. It is not far from several important sites in the Historical Area such as the Zhoushan Road Commercial Street, Huoshan Park, the Ohel Moshe Synagogue, and the JDC Office. Therefore, it can be rebuilt into a comprehensive leisure center in the entire Historical Area. It is recommended to find the original graphic materials of the Mascot Roof Garden as soon as possible to restore its original appearance and the function of the outdoor Café.
- (4) Zhoushan Road Commercial Street. It is recommended to restore the commercial and residential functions of Zhoushan Road and rectify the appearance of houses and shops on both sides of the road, such as unifying the specifications of store signboards. The Blumenthal Residence at 59 Zhoushan Road must be preserved and restored to its original condition.
- (5) 818 Lane on Tangshan Road. Although the buildings here were not included in the Historical Area, they were the well-known “Jewish alley” in the past and must be properly protected. The appearance of the buildings can be preserved and restored, and the interior of the buildings can be modified to improve the living conditions of the residents without destroying the building structure. At the same time, some residents can be resettled by replacing the property or providing preferential housing subsidies to reduce the floor area ratio and extend the service life of these buildings. We can hang a bronze medal at the entrance of the alley to explain the historical and cultural value of the alley in both Chinese and English.

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## Chapter 12

# Struggling to Survive: Why Could Jewish Refugees Survive and Prosper in China



From 1938 to 1945, most Jewish refugees spent nearly eight years of hard years in China. For a few Jewish refugees who came to China in 1933, they took refuge in China for 12 years. From February 1943 to August 1945, 20,000 Jewish refugees spent the most difficult period in the Ghetto in Hongkou. The good news is that the vast majority of Jewish refugees in China have survived all the hardships. Why could they survive in the war-torn China, especially in the Japanese-controlled areas like Shanghai, Tianjin and Harbin? The reasons are complex and this chapter attempts to figure out some clues.

### 12.1 Hard Work of the Jewish Refugees

Among this group of Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, Poland and other countries, many were outstanding intellectuals and professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, architects, accountants, business executives, editors, journalists, writers, actors, painters, musicians and skilled workers from various industries. They could help each other during the hard times. There were flocks of medical workers among the refugees and over 200 of them were physicians. In late 1938, these medical workers established a clinic in the refugee camp. In March 1939, the first refugee hospital was established with 60 beds. According to the 1940 annual report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, the Jewish Refugee Hospital on Ward Road had already been equipped with 120 beds and “had set up various departments like X-ray, dental, ophthalmology, and obstetrics department. The income of this hospital was probably enough to cover its expenses.”<sup>1</sup>

Teachers among refugees kept teaching children and cultivating adults with professional skills and literacy knowledge under difficult conditions. Some refugee teachers later became the backbone of the two full-time schools that received Jew-

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<sup>1</sup>*Annual Report of Shanghai Municipal Council (1940)*, p. 472.

ish refugee children. The editors and journalists of the refugees themselves founded newspapers and magazines. From 1939 to 1945, they actually maintained several German newspapers and periodicals. Among them, the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle and the Die Gelbe Post had extensive social influence and a high level of readership, which is quite difficult. The artists in the refugees were even more eager to perform dramas and hold concerts. They even stage the first Yiddish drama in Shanghai, enriching the cultural life of the refugees. In November 1943, Jewish refugees also established an Association for Asian Studies in Hongkou to teach and study topics in culture, art, history, philosophy, and medicine in China and other Asian countries.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the above efforts to maintain normal life, the spirit of solidarity that refugees showed at times of crisis or hard times was also admirable. Due to the interruption of external assistance, the year from 1942 to 1944 was the most difficult period for Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The rising number of deaths can indicate this: 130 deaths in 1940, 167 deaths in 1941, 320 deaths in 1942, 311 deaths in 1943.<sup>3</sup> Especially after being forced to move into the Hongkou Ghetto in February 1943, the situation was even more sinister. Under such circumstances, many Jewish refugees had to rely on begging to live, but each one of them could still unite and help each other. According to the memories of the refugees of that year: “Despite the considerable internal friction, in general, the Jewish community showed amazing unity”; the refugees formed bands and football teams to organize cultural and sports activities in the narrow world of Hongkou. In the spirit of optimism, the hard times were spent. Some refugees established mobile libraries, organized book exchanges, and provided spiritual food for the refugees under difficult conditions.<sup>4</sup>

## 12.2 Support from All Sides in and Out of China

The first is the full support from the Shanghai Zionist Association for the European Jewish refugees. British Jews had strong financial resources and naturally played the most important role in helping Jewish refugees. Like the Kadoorie family, in addition to setting up a meeting to discuss the rescue of Jewish refugees, also donated large sums of money for the placement of Jewish refugees. It is particularly worth mentioning that the Kadoorie family founded the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association (SJYA), which was dedicated to running schools. The SJYA (also known as the Kadoorie School), founded by the association, allowed refugees' children who cannot afford tuition to enroll free of charge. Its number of students in the war time was remained at around 700 with a high reputation among Jewish refugees. Many of these children who were educated at the Kadoorie School were later developed into

<sup>2</sup>*Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, Shanghai Echo, November 6, 1943.*

<sup>3</sup>The data were based on the statistics of the book *Japanese, Nazis & Jews: The Jewish refugee community of Shanghai, 1938–1945* (David Kranzler), and the Report of the International Red Cross Society on the Status of Jewish Refugees in Shanghai in 1943.

<sup>4</sup>Pan Guang ed., *Shanghai Jews Memoirs*, p. 115.

outstanding talented people. The Sassoon family also donated money many times to help to settle the Jewish refugees. Although the Russian Jews were not as rich as the Sephardi Jews, they had a large number of people, strong mobility, and were the same as the Ashkenazi Jews of the German, Austrian and Polish Jews. Therefore, they were more motivated and had done a lot of detailed and complicated concrete jobs. After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, Jews from the UK, America and other countries nationality became “enemy alien”, and Russian Jews still enjoyed the treatment of neutral state because of the absence of war between Japan and the Soviet Union. Thereafter, until August 1945, Russian Jews assumed the task of financing Jewish refugees. They were generally small and medium-sized business owners who operated western restaurants, bakeries, and grocery stores. They were not economically affluent, but they were still frugal and tried their best to support their poor compatriots, so that they could survive the most difficult years during the war.

Secondly, various overseas organizations, especially Jewish organizations, had given a large amount of financial and material assistance to the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. Initially, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other organizations were concerned about the Chinese refugees in Shanghai and also provided strong rescues to Jewish refugees in Shanghai. But then, due to the wars in various parts of the world, refugees suffered everywhere, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other organizations were not able to take care of the tens of thousands of Jewish refugees in Shanghai. It is the Jewish organizations all over the world, especially the Jewish organizations in the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, India, Japan, Sweden, Portugal, etc., because there was nothing to do with the plight of European Jews, they could concentrate on aiding and relieving European Jewish refugees in places like Shanghai. The names of such organizations are numerous and difficult to enumerate. As mentioned before, the most prominent of these was the JDC. This organization set up an office in Shanghai after 1938, and sent resident representatives to write reports reflecting the situation of Jewish refugees in Shanghai at regular intervals, and raised a large amount of donations for Shanghai Jewish refugees in the United States, almost monthly 30,000 US dollars.<sup>5</sup> After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the JDC headquarters in New York had a dispute over whether to continue sending money to Shanghai. In the end, JDC interrupted the funding of Jewish refugees in Shanghai in May 1942 for fear of causing criticism from the US government and anti-Semitic forces. At the same time, JDC's representative in Shanghai, Laura Margolis, was also taken into the concentration camp by the Japanese occupation forces. In March 1944, Margolis, who was released to the country, worked hard and received acquiescence from the US government. JDC's funding for Shanghai was resumed.

The third is that the Chinese people were helping each other in the face of Jewish refugees. As is known to all, after the “8.13 Incident”, the Japanese invaders occupied Shanghai, and the Shanghai residents themselves became refugees and had to live in refugee camps, too. However, the Shanghai residents still overcame all kinds of

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<sup>5</sup>Tokayer and Swartz (1992, p. 201).

difficulties and gave selfless support to Jewish refugees as far as they could. The Jewish refugees recalled: “When we were thirsty, the Chinese gave us water. When we were hungry, they gave us rice cakes. Although our days at that time were not good, they were much worse than us and also showing their strong sympathy on us.”<sup>6</sup> At that time, the citizens of Hongkou overcame various difficulties and freed their own houses to refugees. Before the establishment of the Jewish refugee hospitals, Chinese hospitals admitted many Jewish refugees and saved many of them. After the Pearl Harbor Incident, the Japanese occupying forces searched for “enemy alien” among the Jews in Shanghai. The Chinese residents had tried their best to cover the Jewish children and prevented them from being placed in concentration camps.<sup>7</sup> During the most difficult period from 1942 to 1944, Jewish refugees helped each other with their Chinese neighbors. In July 1945, the United States accidentally bombed the Jewish refugee settlements in Hongkou, killing 31 Jewish refugees and injuring 250 refugees. Although the surrounding Chinese residents themselves suffered a lot, they still rushed into the sea of fire and rescued many Jewish people. Refugees have written a touching page in the history of modern Chinese-Jewish relations.

### **12.3 Policy Division Between Germany and Japan Towards Jews and the Soviet Union Turning the Table Against Germany**

Why did Japanese fascists allow Jewish refugees to enter Shanghai and have not persecuted Jewish refugees in Shanghai? Most people don’t figure out the reason behind. To clarify this issue, we need to trace the evolution of Japan’s policy toward Jews.

After 1931, as Japan invaded China’s northeast and continued to step inland. The tension between some Western countries with vested interests in China, including Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and the Soviet Union built up. Under such circumstances, some Japanese “Jewish experts”, including Norihiro Yasue, Koreshige Inuzuka, Yoshisuke Aikawa and Setsuko Kotsuji, put forward the idea of consolidating the rule in Northeast China and easing the relationship with the United States, the United States and the Soviet Union by implementing the policy of support and goodwill to the Jews. This series of ideas were unofficially known as “the Fugu plan”.<sup>8</sup> From 1931 to 1937, the Japanese government did adopt some of the measures proposed by these experts. For example, Jews in Harbin, Shanghai, and Kobe were allowed to establish the Council for Jews in Far East together. Jewish entrepreneurs in three northeastern provinces of China were encouraged to conduct business and to attract more capital from Jews to develop the Manchuria. Besides, the Japanese government was trying to please the Jewish consortiums in Shanghai and

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<sup>6</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 2006.

<sup>7</sup>*Jiefang Daily*, January 13, 2004.

<sup>8</sup>Marvin Tokayer, *The Fugu Plan*.

Tianjin, and holding acquiescence to European Jewish refugees entering Shanghai and other places. Did everything possible to pull relations with American Jewish organizations and hope to “affect” the US government’s policy toward Japan through them. Although these practices had a little effect on appeasing the Jews in China, they have not achieved the expected goals in diplomacy because the policy is based on the fact that the Jews can influence the US decision-making and the Soviet policy, and this standpoint was very Solid, even fictional.

After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out in an all-round way. The United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union and other countries unanimously condemned Japan’s acts of aggression. Jews from all over the world, including those in China, also took an increasingly strong critical attitude toward Japan. Under the circumstances, the Japanese Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Army Minister, Naval Minister, and Finance Ministry convened a Five Ministers’ Conference devoted to the issue of Jewish policy on December 5, 1938. The Conference indicates that the Japanese high-level leadership attached importance to the Jewish issues at that time. On the Conference, although the five Ministers held different views on Jewish policy, they endorsed the ideas and efforts of the “Jewish experts”. Shortly after the Five Ministers’ Conference, the “Jewish experts” led by Norihiro put forward a more specific plan on Jewish policy that turned the “Fugu Plan” from a hodgepodge of “pro-Semitic” measures into a feasible plan. The 90-page plan entitled “The Study and Analysis of Introducing Jewish Capital” expressed the following opinions: Establish a “Jewish residence” on Chinese land under Japanese occupation to settle 30,000 Jewish refugees first, and then gradually expand; The cost of establishing the “residence” will be borne by the American Jewish consortium, which would firstly need 100 million USD for the resettlement fee; The plan should be widely publicized in the United States and other Western countries. Jewish celebrities from all over the world should be invited to visit this “residence”; This “residence” were built to attract Jewish capital and improve relations with some Western countries such as the United States.<sup>9</sup> Upon the approval of the Japanese high-level leadership, the “Jewish experts” promoted the plan all over the world, especially in Shanghai and Harbin. They also did lobbying work in United States. Under such circumstances, the Japanese authorities acquiesced in the influx of Jewish refugees into Shanghai after 1937.

No matter how hard the Japanese tried, the “Fugu Plan” failed in the end for a simple reason: Japanese and German fascists gradually merged and launched the world war, making Jews around the world clearly realize that the Japanese authorities and Hitler were birds of a feather. Thus, they flatly refused the so-called plan of “Jewish residence”. After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the Japanese authorities finally gave up the “Fugu Plan”. Japan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Shigenori Tōgō said in a letter to the “ambassador” to the Wang Jingwei Reorganized National Government: “Due to the outbreak of the Pacific War, we have to reconsider our policies on Jews.”<sup>10</sup> It was under such circumstances that

<sup>9</sup>Marvin Tokayer, *The Fugu Plan*.

<sup>10</sup>Marvin Tokayer, *The Fugu Plan*.

Germany believed that Japan would inevitably turn to the Anti-Semitism policy, thus laid out the Meisinger Plan.

However, Japan did not follow Germany in its policy towards Jews and there were still obvious differences between Japan and Germany in their policy towards Jews. Japan did not implement the Meisinger Plan in the end. There are five main reasons for this.

- (1) There was still a force within Japan that making peace with the United States. Japanese who advocated making peace with the United States still regard Jews in China as a bond to maintain contact with the United States. Therefore, they disagree with the slaughtering policy. The “Jewish experts” were still exerting limited influence.<sup>11</sup>
- (2) Japanese high-level leadership were worried about their relationship with Soviet Union. At that time, Japanese high-level leadership still tried to maintain non-war relations with the Soviet Union. If the slaughter of Jews in Shanghai happened, it necessarily involved Russian Jews, which would have a negative impact on Japan-Soviet relations. So Japanese tried to avoid this.
- (3) Lobbying activities among Harbin and Japanese Jewish communities. The Shanghai Jewish community lobbied senior Japanese officials not to implement the Meisinger Plan through the Jews in Harbin (which belonged to State of Manchukuo at that time) and Japan, which also made some difference.
- (4) There is no anti-Semitic religious prejudice in East Asian Confucian culture. East Asia is a traditional Confucian cultural region. There is no religious, ethnic or cultural prejudice that sweep the Christian region in Europe. Therefore, the middle and lower-level Japanese officials in Shanghai were also difficult to accept the Meisinger Plan in terms of thoughts and feelings. Actually, they did not have interest on this plan, even some of them secretly helped the Jews. For example, the Japanese diplomat in Shanghai, Shibata, was arrested and dismissed for helping the Jews.<sup>12</sup>
- (5) The situation on the German-Soviet War was reversed. The situation on the German-Soviet War was reversed. The Soviet Union turned defeat into victory that its elimination of 300,000 German troops and this became an important reason for Japan’s decision not to implement the Meisinger Plan. German scholar Heinz Eberhard Maul’s book *Warum Japan Keine Juden verfolgte, Die Judenpolitik des Kaiserreiches Japan wahrend der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933–1945* analyzes the process of how Japan changed its attitude: in the summer of 1942, Germany seemed to win the German-Soviet War, so Japan began to consider the Germany’s plan of slaughtering the Jews in Shanghai. However, after Germany suffered a heavy defeat in the Battle of Stalingrad, Japan refused to go to war with Soviet Union and changed its attitude towards the slaughter of Jews. Finally, Japan adopted the method of isolating the Jews. The Battle of

<sup>11</sup>As late as 1945, some Japanese high-level officials still wanted to revive the Fugu Plan in order to explore the possibility of peace with the United States.

<sup>12</sup>Marvin Tokayer interviewed Mitzsugi Shibata on May 14, 1976 at the Hotel Okura Tokyo in Japan.

Stalingrad ended in January 1943, and it was no accident that Japan announced the establishment of “Designated Area for Stateless Refugees”. Maul’s key conclusion was that it is not Japan’s magnanimity that saved the lives of the Jews in Shanghai, but a turning point in the German-Soviet War.<sup>13</sup>

In short, the above-mentioned various factors are intertwined to play a role in securing the Jewish refugees’ survival in Shanghai under the Japanese fascist occupation.

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<sup>13</sup>Maul (2007).

## Chapter 13

# Perfect Combination of Traditional Historiography, Public History and Oral History: Studies of Jews in China Since the Mid-20th Century



The study on Jewish refugees in China is an integral part of the study on Jews in China. This chapter will cast light on the development of the study on Jews in China from a broader perspective, with a special focus on Jewish refugees.

Since the middle of the 20th century, literature on the Jews in China had sprouted up. By the 1980s, this subject had become a hot issue around the world. Different from the academic enthusiasm on the “Kaifeng Jews” in the West back in the 19th century, the interest in the “Jews in China” was not only from scholars, but also from the media, film and television fields of public concern, and even full of society and political overtones. Political overtones. The reason for this is that the study of the Chinese chapter in the history of the Jewish nation has important academic value in Judaism, Sinology, history, religion, ethnology, cultural anthropology, philosophy, etc. It is of great practical significance to learn from history, to create a future, to fight racism and fascism, to promote friendly exchanges between various ethnic groups, to dialogue between different civilizations, and to build a harmonious world.

### 13.1 Outcome and Activities of Academic Research<sup>1</sup>

The study on the Jews in China began to bud in the 1940s and 1950s, and gradually gained momentum in the 1960s and 1970s. It reached a climax in the 1980s and 1990s, especially after 1992, when the PRC and the State of Israel established diplomatic relations and remains a hot issue in the 21st century. During that period, despite a few studies on the Jews in ancient China, in particular the Kaifeng Jews which appeared now and then, the major focus has been fixed on the Jews who came to Shanghai after 1840. In recent years, there has been a growing number of literature documents on the Harbin Jews as well as the Jewish communities in Tianjin and Hong Kong, but the research on the Jewish community in Taiwan and Jews in Taiwan is still quite weak. The longitudinal study of the Chinese Jews has highlighted several new

<sup>1</sup>For the books mentioned in this chapter, please see the Bibliography attached to this book.

periods, including the period after World War II, the period after the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the period after China's reform and opening-up policy. Below is a review of the development of Jewish studies in China since the middle of the last century, which can be divided into five phases.

### **13.1.1 Foreign Researches on the Jews in China Before China Implemented the Reform and Opening-up Policy in 1979**

From the mid-20th century to the beginning of the reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s, due to the anti-Japanese war, the civil war, the several political movements after the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the decade of the Cultural Revolution, the study of Jews in China remained stagnant. Even though some Chinese scholars did come up with some ideas in this field during that period, they did not release them until the political chaos was over. As a result, the majority of the literature on the “Chinese Jews” during that period was from foreign scholars.

The *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai*, written by Anna Ginsbourg and published in 1941, may be one of the earliest books on the European Jewish refugees coming to Shanghai. In the following 20 years, few books were published because of World War II and the Cold War, but quite a few articles were released, most of which were objective introductions of the situations of the Chinese Jews. In 1962, Herman Dicker released *Wanderers and Settlers in the Far East: A Century of Jewish Life in China and Japan*, which was the first book in the world that comprehensively and systematically studies the Jews coming to China after 1840, with a special focus on the Jewish communities in Harbin and Shanghai. David Krantzler's *Japanese, Nazis & Jews: The Jewish refugee community of Shanghai, 1938–1945*, published in 1976 was known for its rich and informative first-hand materials about the European Jewish refugees in Shanghai. In 1979, Marvin Tokayer and Mary Swartz published *The Fugu Plan: The Untold Story of The Japanese And The Jews During World War II*, which told the stories of Polish Jews, who made their way through Lithuania, the Soviet Union and Japan to Shanghai and revealed many of the little-known historical materials about the pre-war and wartime Japanese-Jewish relations. Because this book read like a novel, it had a very wide appeal. It was worth mentioning that many of the unpublished memoirs by the Chinese Jews during that period were also of great academic importance. For example, the memoirs written by William Shortman, a former Shanghai Jewish refugee, Teddy Kaufman, the former chairman of the Harbin Jewish community, Leola Foreman and Monica Swartz, the former member of Tianjin Jewish community, all provided valuable information for later research.

During this period, international writings on the ancient “Chinese Jews” and the Kaifeng Jewish communities appeared from time to time, but basically no new breakthrough was made.

### 13.1.2 Domestic and Foreign Researches on the Jews in China from the Early 1980s to the Early 1990s

From the early 1980s to the early 1990s, the Jewish studies in China developed rapidly as a series of high-quality literature by Chinese scholars on the Kaifeng Jewish communities was published, basically making up for the loss caused during the past 30 years. Jiang Wenhan released *Christianity in Ancient China and Kaifeng Jews in 1982* after long-term researches, which analyzed the formation, development, characteristics and extinction of the Jewish communities in Kaifeng by linking them to Christianity in ancient China. Pan Guangdan published *Some Historical Issues of Jews in China-Kaifeng Jews* in 1983, which talked about not only Kaifeng Jews, but also the Jews in other places of China and elaborated on when and how the Jews came to China, where they were from and what their destinations were. What makes this book more valuable is the bibliography and compilation of historical materials attached to the book. The thesis *Judaism and Jews in Chinese History* submitted by Gao Wangzhi to the 16th International Historical Science Conference drew the following conclusions: the large group of Jews did not come to China until the Tang Dynasty; the Chinese Jews were integrated into the Chinese society thanks to the influence of Confucianism, the religious tolerance in China and the independent situation of the Jewish community. These views received international recognition. In 1990, Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore published Zhang Sui's *Judaism and the Kaifeng Jews in China*, which integrated his field materials with former researches. In addition to the above-mentioned literature, scholars including Jin Xiaojing, Wang Mingfu, Gong Fangzheng, Tang Yusheng, Wu Zelin, Dai Kelai, Chen Changqi, Li Jixian, Zhu Jiang, Wang Yisha, Kong Xianyi, Zhao Youzhi, Xu Boyong also wrote theses about the Jews in ancient China and caused an international impact. A Chinese Jewish scholar Sidney Shapiro was also very active in this field. His book *The Jews in China before 1949*, which was written in English and from the perspective of both the Chinese and the Jews, provided many insights and was acclaimed by academic circles at home and abroad.

Furthermore, the Chinese scholars of the 1980s were no longer satisfied with studying the Kaifeng Jews only, but began to study the new Jewish communities that moved to China after 1840, especially those in Shanghai, which greatly broadened and deepened the Jewish studies in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1982, Xu Zhucheng released the *Biography of Silas Hardoon* and in 1985, Zhang Zhongli and Chen Zeng-nian jointly released *The Sasson Family in Old China*, which once again aroused the Chinese people's great interest in the Jewish consortium in Shanghai. At the same time, a large number of foreign scholars (especially Jewish scholars) and Jews who once lived in China visited Shanghai, Tianjin, and Harbin to collect information and seek roots, which further spurred Chinese scholars to conduct research on this issue. In 1987, Wang Qingyu published an article named the *Jews in Shanghai before 1949*, which introduced the history of the Shanghai Jewish community in the

past 100 years.<sup>2</sup> Pan Guang published two articles, the *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai during World War II* and *A Historical Investigation on the Zionism Activities in Shanghai*, which was a first-time deep study on the Jewish refugees and Zionism in Shanghai by a Chinese scholar.<sup>3</sup> *Israel: Jewish Studies*, a book published in 1991 under the general editorship of Pan Guang and Jin Yingzhong, was also a study on the Jews in Shanghai. In 1988, the Shanghai Jewish Historical Research Center, which was later renamed Shanghai Jewish Research Center, was founded by Pan Guang and mainly focused on the historical development of the Jews in China, especially in Shanghai.

It is worth mentioning that the results of Chinese scholars in the study of “Chinese Jews” since the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy in 1979 were achieved on the basis of the hard work of the predecessors. In other words, credit should be given to the Chinese scholars who started to study in this field in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, namely Hong Jun, Jiang Guanyun, Zhang Xiangwen, Ye Han, Chen Yuan, Zhang Xinglang, Yu Songhua, Yu Gan, Ge Suicheng, Wu Zelin, etc. Their contribution shall never be forgotten.

This period also saw an increase on foreign literature on the Jews in China, especially by European and Israeli scholars. The *Von Oesterreichern und Chinesen* coauthored by Gerd Kaminski and Else Unterrieder and the *L’Action culturelle allemande en Chine* authored by Francoise Kreissler were two books that conducted an in-depth study on the situation the Germany and Austrian Jews in China. The *Shanghai Lost, Jerusalem Regained* authored by Judith Ben-Eliezer and Refugee and Survivor: *Rescue Efforts during the Holocaust* authored by Zorach Warhaftig both described authors’ personal experiences in Shanghai, with first-hand information and historical materials. *Passage Through China, The Jewish Communities of Harbin, Tientsin and Shanghai*, compiled by Israel’s Beth Hatefutsoth The Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, was the first photo album of the Jews in China after 1840. In addition, personal memoirs written by George Lenishy, Isrell Quipon and Abraham Flatkin, also had great historical value. The Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong, established in 1984, was also actively involved in the research on the Jews in Kaifeng, Shanghai and Hong Kong. For example, *The Jewish Community of Hong Kong* written by the Chairman of the Society in 1985, Luo Shigu and his wife, was the earliest comprehensive research on the Jews in Hong Kong.

### **13.1.3 The Climax of the Jewish Study in China After the Establishment of China-Israel Diplomatic Relations in 1992**

The study on the Chinese Jews reached an unprecedented climax after the establishment of China-Israel diplomatic relations in 1992, represented by a great many

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<sup>2</sup>Wang (1987).

<sup>3</sup>Pan (1991, 1992).

international academic conferences and a surge of literature. The number of documents released from 1992 to 2000 in this area exceeded the sum of such literature in the first 90 years of the 20th century.

In August 1992, an international academic seminar on the Jewish Diaspora in China was held at Harvard University. Hundreds of scholars and the Jews who once lived in China attended the seminar. In April 1994, the International Symposium on the Jews in Shanghai jointly organized by the Shanghai Municipal Government and Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai was held in Shanghai. About 200 scholars and the Jews who once lived in Shanghai attended the symposium. In May 1995, when the whole world was celebrating the 50th anniversary of the victory of World War II, an academic seminar on “Escape to Shanghai: Austrian Jewish Refugees in an Eastern Metropolis” was held in Salzburg, Austria, which not only invited dozens of scholars, but also many Jews and their children who had lived in Shanghai to commemorate their experiences. In August 1997, an academic seminar “Exile in Shanghai” was held in Berlin, Germany to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the return of some Shanghai Jews to Berlin. This seminar focused on the German and Austrian Jews who took refuge in Shanghai during World War II and commemorated the historical event of 300 German Jews returning to Berlin in 1947. In September 1997, a seminar on “the Jewish people in China, from Kaifeng to Shanghai” was held, in St. Augustine, Germany, which distinguished itself from other seminars by invited only more than 20 internationally renowned scholars. Some of the theses presented at the seminar touched upon several little-talked topics, such as Fang Jianchang’s *Jews in Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, Beijing, Tianjin, and Qingdao from 1911 to 1931* and Zhang Shouhui’s *Yiddish Literature in China*.<sup>4</sup> There were many small seminars including, among others, the seminar held at the University of California-Los Angeles in January 1999, with the theme “An Oriental Paris? Harbin’s World 1895–1945”, which was one of the few seminars devoted to the study on the Harbin Jews.

During the eight years, more than 30 books were published in the field, 80% of which were about the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, including: *Escape to Shanghai, A Jewish Community in China* authored by James Ross, *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai* authored by Rena Krasno, *History of the Jews in China* authored by Wang Yisha, *Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld: Mensch und Mythos* authored by Gerd Kaminski, *Two-Gun Cohen: A Biography* authored by Daniel Levy, *Mayer: a Danish industrialist in China* authored by the former Danish ambassador to China, Bai Mushen, Yaakov Liberman’s memoirs *My China: Jewish Life in the Orient 1900–1950*, the photo album *Jews in Shanghai* and the Jewish memoirs compilation *Jewish Memories Shanghai* edited by Pan Guang, Evelyn Rubin’s memories and criticism *Ghetto Shanghai*, Ernest Heppner’s memories and criticism *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II*, Isabel Benard’s autobiography *A Chinese Dream: Growing Up in Tianjin as a Jewish, Far From Where? Jewish Journeys From Shanghai to Australia, Victoria, Australia* authored by Antonia Finnane, *Strange Haven: A Jewish Childhood in Wartime Shanghai, Urbana* authored by Sigmund Tobias, *The Jews of China, Vol. One, Historical and Comparative Perspectives* compiled by

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<sup>4</sup>Fang (1996).

Goldstein, etc. The memoirs of Betty Grabenshkov and Aliye Mariinsky also had great historical value. In addition, there were several novels about the Jewish experience in China. For example, the famous French novelist Michele Kahn, the author of many novels about the Nazi Holocaust, published a novel named *Shanghai-la-juive*, which reflects the Jewish refugee experiences in Shanghai. This novel was widely received by European readers and helped them understand the important role played by Shanghai in saving Jewish refugees. It was also translated into German, Dutch and other European languages. Last but not least, there were a few theses on the Jews in Harbin, Tianjin and Hong Kong. For example, Fang Jianchang's *Jews in Harbin in the period of the Manchurian States* and *Jews in Tianjin Between 1840–1919* gave a brief introduction of the history of Jewish people in Harbin and Tianjin for the first time. In 1995, an illustrated history book *A Vision Fulfilled*, was published by the Hong Kong Jewish Community Center, describing the development of the Hong Kong Jewish community with vivid pictures and rhetoric. Pan Guang and Xu Xin also published articles on the development of the Jewish community in Hong Kong during the past 150 years and examined its ties with its counterparts in the Chinese mainland, especially in Shanghai.<sup>5</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the research level of Chinese scholars in the 1990s had topped the international academic community, and a group of young scholars really stood out, namely, Fang Jianchang, who studied the Jews in Northeast China and North China, Wang Jian, who studied the Shanghai Jews, Zhang Qianhong, who studied the Kaifeng Jews, and Zhang Shouhui, a Taiwanese scholar who studied Yiddish literature in China. Meanwhile, middle-aged scholars such as Tang Peiji, Xu Xin, Xu Buzen, Jin Yingzhong, and Shenji also continued his work.

### **13.1.4 Studies on Jews in China in the 21st Century**

In the 21st century, the Jewish studies in China continue to grow. A series of seminars played an important role in deepening and improving researches. Here is a list of the major seminars. In 2001, a series of seminars and exhibitions on Shanghai Jews were held in Toronto and Winnipeg, Canada, and Sydney, Australia. In September 2002, an international symposium on “China, Israel and Jews”, hosted by the Tel Aviv University of Israel and co-organized by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, took place in Hong Kong, looking deeply into the situation of the Jews in China and China-Israeli relations. In September 2003, the Mainz University of Germany hosted an international symposium under the theme “Youtai—Presence and Perception of Jews and Judaism in China”, which conducted systematic study on the Jewish communities and religious activities in Chinese cities including Kaifeng and Shanghai. In June 2004, the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco and the American Jewish Committee jointly organized an academic seminar on the “Early China-Israeli Bonds in Shanghai”, with special focus on the relationship between the

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<sup>5</sup>Pan (1998a), Xu (2000).

Sephardi Jews and the Chinese people. In August and September of 2004, the International Symposium on the History and Culture of Harbin Jews”, was jointly held by the Harbin Jewish Research Center under the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and the Pre-Chinese Residents Association of Israel, which was the first large-scale academic activity on Harbin Jews in China. In August 2005, the Shanghai Jewish Research Center held a seminar on “Jews in Asia: A Comparative Study” and compared China’s Jewish associations with those in India and Japan, which broadened the Jewish studies in China. The theses released on this seminar were later included in the book *Jews in Asia: A Comparative Study*. In December 2005, the Shanghai Jewish Research Center held another international symposium on “Jewish Refugees in Shanghai” to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the rescue of Shanghai Jewish refugees, where Daniel Blumenthal, former Minister for Finance of the US who had lived in Shanghai as a Jewish refugee, gave a keynote speech. In September 2007, the Yiyang Municipal Government of Hunan Province hosted an academic seminar to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the death of Dr. Ho Feng-Shan. On November 10, 2008, the symposium to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Kristallnacht was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where the author made a keynote report about the importance of Shanghai as a sanctuary for Jewish refugees after the Kristallnacht. In 2010, 2012 and 2016, the Shanghai Jewish Research Center held the Jewish Research Youth Forums, which convened a group of middle-aged scholars and laid a solid foundation for the further development of Jewish studies in China. In July 2014, the Shanghai Jewish Research Center, Shanghai Normal University and Princeton University jointly held an academic seminar with the theme “Jews in China: A Hot Issue in Public Historiography”, which recognized the status of this issue in the public historiography for the first time and helped to promote the study on Chinese Jews from research institutions to society.

In the 21st century, although the study on the Chinese Jews has been the mainstream, there were a few articles about the Jews in ancient China. Dang Baohai found out that as recorded in the Zhizheng Jinling Records, a Jewish served as an official in Nanjing during the Yuan Dynasty. Zhang Qianhong paid attention to the reasons of the assimilation of Kaifeng Jews. She believed that “the most fundamental reason of the assimilation of Kaifeng Jews lies within the Jewish community, that is, the dilution of faith in Judaism and the recognition of Confucianism. As Judaism gets more similar to Confucianism, Kaifeng Jews were gradually assimilated”. In addition, Xiao Xian conducted a comparative study on the Jews and Muslims in ancient China to explore the reasons why the Jews were assimilated and the Muslim community continued to grow.<sup>6</sup> Yin Gang also made in-depth research on the issues related to Kaifeng Jews and put forward some unique insights.<sup>7</sup>

The research on the Chinese Jews after 1840 has been further deepened and improved, most particularly on the Shanghai Jews. In 2001, the large Chinese and English illustrated history book *Jews in China*, was published under the editorship

<sup>6</sup>Xiao (2007).

<sup>7</sup>Yin (2008).

of Pan Guang, which introduced the history of Chinese Jews with more than 400 pictures during the past ten centuries. The book was reprinted several times, published in the United States, and translated into German, French, Russian and Hebrew. In 2002, *Shanghai Jews during the Past One and a half Century* co-authored by Pan Guang and Wang Jian was published. In 2010, the two authors released another book *Jews and China: Exchanges and Friendship between Two Ancient Civilizations since 1840*, which deepened the discussion about the following topics: systematically studying on the four climaxes of Jews coming to China since 1840; analyzing their economic, political and cultural activities and their influence on China and Shanghai and including a lot of new materials of the Shanghai Jewish refugee community and Zionism activities; not only studying the Jews in Shanghai, but also in Harbin, Tianjin, Hong Kong and Taiwan; analyzing the reasons why the Jewish people left China after World War II and looking into the situation of Jews in China after the founding of the PRC and the activities of Shanghai Jewish Association; systematically studying the China-Israel relations since 1840, especially the relationship between the anti-fascist war and the Chinese revolution, the friendship between the Chinese and Jewish people, and giving a detailed introduction to the Ho Feng-Shan Revolution and Sunke Plan; and conducting in-depth research on the Chinese Jews around the world and their Chinese and Shanghai memories, and examining the return of Jews to China after the reform and opening-up policy. In 2003, Rao Lihua published a book *The Spiritual Home of Emigre-Researches on the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle* based on his doctoral thesis. The book generalized the characters and diaspora characteristics of Shanghai Jews through a study on the German newspaper *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, analyzed the mindset of Jewish refugees were exiled in a foreign country and revealed their well-rounded reporting skills and profound cultural heritage. Tang Yating did an in-depth study on the music of the Jewish community in Shanghai during different periods and wrote a series of articles. Based on his studies, he wrote a book *The Music of the Jewish Community in Shanghai (1850–1950 and 1998–2005)*. He believed that music was the embodiment of their strong adaptability and provided cultural foundation for the Jewish community. Xu Bu's *Searching for Jews: Jewish Cultural Elites in Shanghai* introduced the contribution of Shanghai Jews to the cultural development of this city. Song Yan's photo album *Hongkou Memory* and Zhang Yanhua's *Tilanqiao—the Noah's Ark of Jews* introduced the Tilanqiao area in Shanghai Hongkou District, which provided shelter for European Jewish refugees. In 2008, Wang Jian published *A History of Shanghai Jewish Social Life*, which introduced the political, economic, cultural, and religious activities of Shanghai Jews, and conducted a special study on their etiquette and social life. In 2010 and 2011, Wang Jian published *Cultural Map of Shanghai Jews and Space Stories Shanghai Jews: the Past and Present of Tilanqiao* (in cooperation with Zhang Yanhua), which conducted researches in a popular style.

This period also saw a surge of literature by foreign scholars and former Jewish residents in Shanghai, including Maisie Meyer's *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo: A Century of Sephardi Jewish Life in Shanghai*, which comprehensively studied the Shanghai Sephardi Jewish community, Hiroshi Bando's *Japan's Policy Towards Jews, 1931–1945*, which introduced the evolution of Japan's policies for

the Jews; Naoki Maruyama's *The Pacific War and the Jewish Refugees in Shanghai*, which was the first study on Jewish refugees in wartime Shanghai from the perspective of a Japanese scholar, *Exil Shanghai 1938–1947, Juedisches Leben in der Emigration* edited by Georg Armbreuster, Michael Koehlstruck, and Sonja Muehlberger, which was a compilation of papers and memoirs that were of great value, Marcia Ristaino's *Port of Last Resort: The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai*, which not only studied Shanghai Jews, but also studied other diaspora communities in Shanghai, Gerd Kaminski's *China gemalt—Chinesische Zeitgeschichte in Bildern Friedrich Schiffs* which introduced the life of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai with vivid languages and pictures, Rena Krasno's *Once Upon a Time in Shanghai: a Jewish Girl's life in Shanghai 1923–1949*, which described the life of the Russian Jewish community, and the Shanghai-born Sam Moshinsky's *Goodbye Shanghai, A Memoir, Mind Film & Publishing*, which depicted the life of a Russian Jewish family in Shanghai. The memoirs of Sonia Mugenberg, Lily Skar, Matok Nissim and Fred Anteman all have great historical value.

Furthermore, the study on Harbin Jews developed rapidly and a lot of academic results have emerged, including Qu Wei and Li Shuxiao's illustrated history book *Jews in Harbin and Harbin Jews*, a compilation of essays, reports, interviews and memoirs, Zhang Tiejiang's collected papers, *The Mystery Harbin Jews: A Study of Harbin Jewish Community, Homesick Harbin Jews* co-edited by Qu Wei and Teddy Kaufman, Liu Shuang's *A History of Harbin Jewish*, and *A History of Harbin's Jewish Family* coauthored by Han Tianyan, Cheng Hongze and Xiao Hong. With more and more historical materials being found, these scholars drew up a conclusion that the reasons why Jews came to Harbin are mainly because of the anti-semitism policies of the tsarist Russia, the construction of the Middle East Railway, the revolution triggered by Soviet Russia, as well as opportunities in the opened Northeast of China.<sup>8</sup> Some scholars further studied the population, nationality and occupational structure of Harbin Jews.<sup>9</sup> They also studied their social life, organizations and activities and made a preliminary investigation into the evolution of the Japan-Jewish relations during the Manchukuo period. The cultural activities and achievements of Harbin Jews were also a major focus of scholars, such as the B'nai B'rith, the Jewish synagogue and cemetery, and newspapers and journals. Similar to the Shanghai Jews, the Harbin Jews played a pivotal role in Harbin's economy, finance, industry and commerce. The economic activities of Harbin Jews were also comprehensively studied by scholars. They even conducted a case study on influential Jewish families and Jewish businessmen, who enjoyed a dominant position in the Harbin Chamber of Commerce and introduced a large amount of international funds through financial activities.<sup>10</sup> When talking about the historical status of Harbin Jews, Qu Wei pointed out their major achievements included: an integrated international community, several economic and trade miracles, architectures with cultural characteristics, a cultural environment

<sup>8</sup>Zhang (2000), Liu (2004), Wang (2006).

<sup>9</sup>Li and Fu (2001).

<sup>10</sup>Zhang (2006).

with cohesiveness and vitality, and many world-renowned talents.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, there were several books about Harbin Jews written foreign scholars, including Teddy Kaufman's *Harbin Jews in My Heart* and Hellmut Stern's *Split: Memoirs of Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's Chief Violinist* and Mara Moustafine's *Secrets and Spies: Harbin Files*. The first two books described the history of Harbin Jews based personal and family experiences, and the third book revealed the miseries of some Harbin Jewish who returned to the Soviet Union based on historical material found in the KGB File.

During this period, the discovery of relevant documents and files contributed to the increasing study on Tianjin Jews. On the basis of Fang Jianchang's preliminary research, Wang Lixin conducted a comprehensive study on the economic and social life of Tianjin Jews and wrote *Jews in Modern Tianjin and Their Economic and Social Life*.<sup>12</sup> *The Jews in Tianjin* (photo album) and *Sacred Ferry: Jews in Tianjin* edited by Song Anna were another important achievements, which introduced the study on Tianjin Jews to the public and the world. The Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong played an important role in expanding the study on Jews in Hong Kong, with the joint efforts of scholars in Chinese Mainland. Pan Guang and Zhou Guojian studied the relationship between the Hong Kong Jewish community and the PRC before and after the Cultural Revolution, and their cultural and educational activities, occupational structure and nationality in today's Hong Kong.<sup>13</sup> As an integral part of China, Taiwan is also home to a small but very active Jewish community. On the basis of the information provided by the Taiwan Jewish community, Pan Guang and Zhou Guojian made a preliminary inspection of the Taiwan Jews.<sup>14</sup>

Among the academic writings on Jewish studies in China in the 21st century, some researches do not target Jews in a certain city or region, but comprehensively study the whole group of "Chinese Jews", such as the new Jewish community in China since the reform and opening-up policy. Other studies focus on the China-Jewish relations, including China-Israeli relations. At the same time, many memoirs of Chinese Jews have been published, revealing more valuable historical materials. Jonathan Goldstein's *The Jews of China, Vol. One, Historical and Comparative Perspectives* and *The Jews of China, Vol. Two, A Sourcebook and Research Guide* provided a solid foundation for Jewish research in China. *From Kaifeng to Shanghai, Jews in China Romance* edited by Roman Malek collected a number of valuable academic achievements and conducted a comprehensive study of "Chinese Jews" from ancient times to the present. The essay collection *Presence and Perception of Jews and Judaism in China* edited by Peter Kupfer analyzed the opinions of Chinese people about Jews and Judaism. Based on his doctoral thesis, Zhou Xun wrote the book *Jews and Judaism in the Eyes of Chinese People: The Development of Chinese Views on Jews*, which was the first comprehensive and systematical study on the development of Chinese views on Jews. The former Israeli ambassador to

<sup>11</sup>Qu (2004).

<sup>12</sup>Wang (2007).

<sup>13</sup>Pan and Zhou (2007).

<sup>14</sup>Pan and Zhou (2007).

China, E. Zev Sufott's *A China Diary: Towards the Establishment of China-Israel Diplomatic Relations* and Jonathan Goldstein's *China and Israel, 1948–1998: A Fifty Year Retrospective* focused on the evolution of the China-Jewish and China-Israel relations and revealed some important historical facts for the first time. There were also books shedding light on the friendship between the Chinese and Jewish people. For example, *Ho Feng-Shan, Righteous Among the Nations* written by Jiang Zuobin introduced Dr. Ho Feng-Shan, the Chinese former Consul General in Vienna who helped rescue Jewish refugees and *China and the International Brigades during the Spanish Anti-Fascist War* written Zhang Zhishan told the stories of a group of Jewish doctors in the International Brigades who came to China to support Chinese people's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. In addition, more and more Chinese Jewish memoirs were published and played an important role in promoting Jewish studies in China, such as Israel Epstein's *My China Eye: Memoirs of a Jew and a Journalist*, Sidney Rittenberg's *The Man Who Stayed Behind* and Eva Sandberg Xiao's *The Love of Xiao San and Me*. Research on Jews after the establishment of the PRC, in particular on the new Jewish community in the Chinese mainland since the reform and opening up, is a new field of Jewish research in China. In recent years, Chinese scholars including Pan Guang, Wang Jian, Wang Shuming, Zhou Guojian and Xu Xin have released a number of theses on this issue and put forward some views of academic and practical significance. It is worth noting that the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai has launched the *Book Series of Jewish and Israeli Studies* since 2007. The first book of this series is *Jews in Asia: A Comparative Study*, which conducts a comparative study on the Jewish communities in China, India, Japan, the Philippines and Singapore. The second book is *Jewish Studies in China: A Review of the Past Thirty Years 1978–2008*, which gives a detailed introduction of the important writings and achievements of Jewish studies in China. The third book is *Political and Cultural Effects of the Nazi Holocaust*, which analyzes the consequences and effects of the Nazi Holocaust and is closely related to the Jewish refugees in China. The fourth book is *Jews in the United States: The Development and Influence of a Successful Ethnic Group*, which includes a chapter introducing the Jewish Studies in China. The fifth book is *Diaspora and Asylum: The Unforgettable History of the Jewish People*, which once again digs deep into the reasons why Jews sought asylum in China.

### **13.1.5 “A Study of Jewish Refugees in China” as a Major Project Supported by National Social Science Foundation**

At the end of 2010, after review by national senior experts, “A Study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945)” was officially established as a major project of the National Social Science Fund of China, with Prof. Pan Guang serving as Chief Expert. This strategic move has greatly promoted and improved the quality and level

of Jewish researches in China. For the past five years, the project team has exerted all their energies to interview the former Jewish refugees and their descendants, preserve their oral and written memories, and collect a large number of documents and files related to Jewish refugees. After a systematic and in-depth study of these materials, they consolidated the data and theoretical basis of the research, creating favorable conditions for higher quality outcome. In 2015, the project team released one of the main achievements, that is, *Unforgettable Memory of Tough Times: Memoirs of Jewish Refugees* in China edited by Pan Guang. This book used the first-hand oral and written historical materials of Jewish refugees in China to depict their experiences of fleeing from Nazi-occupied Europe to Shanghai and entered China, struggling in Hongkou Ghetto and making friends with the Chinese people, and also the Chinese memories and the Shanghai complex after leaving China. This book is of special significance when the world is commemorating the 70th anniversary of the victory of the anti-fascist war and the Chinese People is commemorating the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

The project team expert Wang Jian also released two popular books *Rescue and Salvation: Jewish Refugees and Shanghai in World War II* and *Jewish Refugees and Shanghai*. Another project team expert Steve Hochstadt specializes in the oral history of Jewish refugees in China. After interviewing dozens of former Shanghai Jewish refugees who now live in the United States more than 20 years, he released *Exodus to Shanghai, Stories of Escape from the Third Reich*, Palgrave Macmillan, which provides a wealth of first-hand information for us to study Jewish refugees in China. On this basis, the project team has collected a large number of relevant documents, files, newspapers, memories, figures, and evaluations, and compiled four volumes of the *Information Collection of Jewish Refugees* in China, preparing for the completion of the final outcome of the project. In May 2017, the Information Collection of Jewish Refugees in China was published. Before long, the final outcome of this project *A Study of Jewish Refugees in China (1933–1945): Facts, Theories and the Chinese Model* has been drafted and will be published soon.

As time goes by, the Jews who once lived in China are aging and many of them people have passed away, leading to the loss of many important information. Therefore, our priority is to preserve these materials, including the physical materials and the intangible materials in their minds. It is also set up as one of the major purposes of this project. At the same time, a group of institutions including the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, Hoover Institution at Stanford University, American Sino-Semitic Research Association, the Yivo Institute, the Leo Baeck Institute, the Old China Hands Archive at California State University, Northridge, the Department of the 20th Century History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Shanghai Jiaotong University Press, and the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum have all laid much stress on collecting the historical materials of the “Chinese Jews” and their descendants, and begun to interview them for oral history files. We believe that with the gradual advancement of this huge project, the foundation of Jewish research in China will be further consolidated.

## 13.2 Exhibitions, Films and Music Works

The topic “Jews in China” has raised widespread social concern, thanks to the efforts made by Chinese Jews and China’s international friends around the world. This is because they fully understand the academic value of this topic and place more emphasis on its relevance to today’s world, like promoting the friendship between Chinese and Jews, fighting against fascism, and preserving peace in the world. Scholars are also pleased to see their research results producing social effects and make some attempts on this, despite the fact that they tend to give priority to academic matters. In the process of the academic wave “Jews in China” spreading across the society, exhibitions, films, TV shows and musical works have played a prominent role.

### 13.2.1 Exhibitions, Films and TV Shows in the Second Half of the 20th Century

As early as 1948, the Yivo-Yiddish Scientific Institute in New York held an exhibition entitled “Jewish Life in Shanghai”<sup>15</sup> but produced little sensation at that time, probably because topics about China in the Cold War era were highly sensitive and politicized. Until the early 1980s, or 30 years since then, exhibitions, films and TV shows on “Chinese Jews” were made in a large number and such topics finally became a hot issue of social concern. It was clear that these changes were associated with increased global attention to China attracted by China’s reform and opening up.

In 1983, an exhibition looking at Kaifeng Jews was hosted by the Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutsot in Tel Aviv, Israel with the assistance of local Chinese Jews and scholars, making a great sensation. In this exhibition, the model of the Kaifeng Synagogue, resembling classic Chinese temples, impressed visitors from all over the world as a wonderful integration of Chinese and Jewish cultures. This model has become a permanent exhibit of this museum and appeared on the Israeli stamp. The Museum also issued a photo album on these exhibits entitled “The Jews of Kaifeng: Chinese Jews on the Banks of the Yellow River”.<sup>16</sup> Besides, the World Jewish Congress, the Sino-Judaic Institute and some other organizations filmed documentaries on Kaifeng Jews and Shanghai Jews, but these documentaries were mainly circulated in the academic community. In 1989, Belgian Jewish producer and director Diane Perelsztejn filmed the art documentary *Escape to the Rising Sun*, depicting the escape of five Polish Jews from Poland to Shanghai via Lithuania, the Soviet Union, and Japan in realistic style. This documentary raised the public concern on Jews in Shanghai during World War II as soon as it came out. Subsequently, many Shanghai Jews made comments and scholars wrote articles on that history. The documentary was later the winner of documentary for the Sydney Film Festival. On the eve of the

<sup>15</sup>Yivo-Yiddish Scientific Institute, *Catalogue of the Exhibition, Jewish Life in Shanghai*, New York, 1948.

<sup>16</sup>Beth (1984).

establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel, or at the end of 1991, the Center for Israel and Judaic Studies of the Institute of Peace and Development I cofounded with others and the Simon Wiesenthal Center dedicated to the study of the Nazi Holocaust, jointly held an exhibition in Shanghai on the Holocaust for the first time. Also opened was a companion exhibition on Jews in Shanghai, which was probably the first exhibition designed by Chinese themselves on Jews in China. The companion exhibition caused a sensation in Shanghai and created a political climate conducive to the formalized diplomatic relations between Israel and China. Part of the exhibits on Jewish refugees were transferred to the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum (the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue) for permanent exhibition.

The normal relations between Israel and China were established in January 1992, starting the year with friendly China-Israel relations and igniting research interests in "Jews in China". Shortly afterwards, the documentary *A Place to Save Your Life* by Canadian filmmaker Karen Shopsowitz came out, receiving warm response from audience in Canada and the United States. Having interviewed dozens of European Jewish refugees who had taken refuge in Shanghai and then lived in the United States, Canada, Israel or Australia, the film crew set the film location in Shanghai so as to offer a vivid version of Shanghai Jewish refugees. In August 1992, the exhibition "China and the Jews" was held at the Harvard Library, during the conference "Jewish Diasporas in China" at Harvard University, which attracted great interest of the American public. The book *China and the Jews* written by Israeli scholar Irene Eber involving exhibit catalogue, part exhibits and comments<sup>17</sup> was published by the Harvard Library.

In April 1994, the exhibition "Shanghai Jewish Communities" was held by the Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutot in Israel and the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, in conjunction with the International Symposium on "Jews in Shanghai" in Shanghai. In the exhibition, the development of the Shanghai Jewish communities was presented to visitors through photos for the first time. Moreover, the exhibition far exceeded those of the same kind in its exhibit quality and technical level. After the exhibition ended, all the photos were transferred to the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai for permanent exhibition, attracting Jewish visitors from all over the world.

In May 1995, coinciding with the symposium "Escape to Shanghai" in Salzburg, Austria, two exhibitions were organized by Austria, of which one is a small exhibition on Austrian Jewish refugees in Shanghai, and the other is an art exhibition on the Austrian Jewish painter Friedrich Schiff, displaying dozens of paintings he drew during his stay in Shanghai as a refugee. These two exhibitions achieved a great success in Austria and Central Europe. Many young visitors expressed they would never forget this page in history and make contribution to the friendship between Chinese and Jews.

In 1996, at the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Austria, the exhibition "A Great Friend of the Chinese People: The Life Story of Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld" was jointly held in Shanghai by the Shang-

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<sup>17</sup>Irene Eber, *China and the Jews*.

hai Academy of Social Sciences and the Austrian-Chinese Friendship Association. The delegation formed by representatives of the two Austrian governing parties at that time and members of the Austrian-Chinese Friendship Association attended the opening ceremony. For the first time, the distinguished life of Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld was presented to Chinese visitors in a comprehensive and systematic way, making visitors feel deeply touched. The headline used by the Shanghai Youth Newspaper when reporting this exhibition was “Austria also has a Bethune”. In the summer of the same year, an exhibition on Shanghai Jewish refugees was hosted by the Leo Baeck Institute in New York City and had a greater impact on the American public due to its downtown location, compared with the exhibition held at the Harvard University in 1992.

In 1997, two exhibitions were designed to accompany the two academic events organized in Berlin and Sankt Augustin in Germany. One exhibition themed on “Exile in Shanghai 1938–1947” was held at the Jewish Museum Berlin, presenting the lives of European Jewish refugees in Shanghai with a large number of pictures and basic necessities like Chinese-style furniture, clothing and some other objects used by Jewish refugees. The exhibition was on a larger scale than previous exhibitions of the same kind and achieved a great success in Germany. The other exhibition in Sankt Augustin themed on “From Kaifeng to Shanghai, Jews in China” was on a small scale but of high academic value. It looked at the history of Jewish immigration into China and the researches on Chinese Jews, covering almost all related academic writings, and delivered real benefits to scholars.

In October 1997, with the strong support of the former Jewish residents in China, the exhibition “The Story of a Haven: The Jews in Shanghai” hosted by the Jewish Museum of Australia was opened in Melbourne. Similar to that exhibition in Berlin, this exhibition used the pictures and objects to showcase the lives of Jewish refugees in Shanghai and was accompanied by symposiums and seminars. For it was the first time that Australia hosted such an exhibition, wide coverage was given to the event by Australian local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations, saying that such exhibitions would promote the cultural exchanges and integration among peoples in Australia. At the same time, a small-scale photo exhibition “At the End of the Silk Road: The Jews of Kaifeng, China” was held in Palo Alto, California by the Sino-Judaic Institute.

From 1997 to 1999, several films and TV shows on Chinese Jews appeared in succession. After years of inquiring into Jewish refugees and filming, Ulrike Ottinger, a famous German film producer, released the documentary *Exil Shanghai* with all the narration in four or five hours on the lives and experiences of Sephardi Jews, Russian Jews and European Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The film was awarded the Best Documentary at the 1997 Berlin International Film Festival. Joan Grossman, an American Jewish film producer, and her partner, Paul Rosdy, filmed *The Port of Resort*, which illustrated the lives of Jewish refugees in Shanghai and gained popularity in the United States, Canada and Europe. Chen Yifei, a Chinese painter living in the United States, invested in and directed the documentary *Sanctuary Shanghai* and the artistic documentary *Escape to Shanghai*. The Shanghai Television also produced a three-episode TV miniseries *Exile in Shanghai*. These films and

TV shows created a phenomenon for Chinese audience, especially the Shanghai audience, making the topic “Chinese Jews” popular in China.

In 1999, the exhibition on the life of Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld was held for the first time in Israel by the Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutot and the Austria-China Friendship Association. The exhibition informed the Israeli public about the contribution made by Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld to the friendship between Chinese and Jews, and between Chinese and Austrians, which drove many into tears. In October of the same year, a range of events on “Jews in Shanghai” were jointly held by the Chinese Cultural Center of Vancouver and the Vancouver Holocaust Education Center in Vancouver, Canada. In addition to the main exhibition, academic lectures, small-group seminars and film screenings were also included. It is worth mentioning that it was the first cooperation between the Chinese community and the Jewish community on such events. Therefore, these events not only had historical, cultural and academic values, but also promoted the friendship between Chinese and Canadians, Chinese and Jews, and the relationship between Canadians and Chinese in Canada. Besides, the historical information on Dr. Ho Feng-Shan, the Consul-general in Vienna, saving Jews by issuing them visas was released to the public for the first time, which caused a world-wide sensation.

### ***13.2.2 Exhibitions, Films and TV Shows in the 21st Century***

Perhaps these events in Vancouver were the last large-scale ones on the Chinese Jews in the 20th century. In the 21st century, increased public concern on the Chinese Jews led to various exhibitions, films and TV shows which were often accompanied with academic conferences. These efforts made this history known to more. Due to the large number of events on the Chinese Jews, this article only listed a few of them.

In May 2000, the exhibition “Flight and Rescue” was held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, involving many historical sources on Jewish flight into Shanghai. It was the first time that the museum held an exhibition on China. From January to March 2001, the Winnipeg Chinese Cultural & Community Centre worked with Winnipeg’s Jewish community to bring the seminar and exhibition themed on “Shanghai Connection”, in commemoration of the great contribution made by Shanghai in saving Jewish refugees. The local Japanese community also participated in these activities, which had never happened before. In November of the same year, the seminar and exhibition “The Jews of Shanghai: A Story of Survival” were jointly held in Toronto by the Chinese Cultural Center of Greater Toronto and the JVS of Greater Toronto. At the same time, an exhibition on “Jews in Shanghai” was held by the Jewish Museum of Australia.

As mentioned above, these academic conferences coincided with related exhibitions, like the international symposium “China, Israel and Jews” hosted in September 2002 in Hong Kong; the international symposium “Youtai – Presence and Perception of Jews and Judaism in China” hosted by the

Mainz University of Germany in September 2003; and the academic seminar “Early China-Israeli Bonds in Shanghai” in June 2004.

Since 2004, several high-level exhibitions on a large scale have been favorably received at home and abroad. For instance, from late August to early September 2004, during the International Seminar on Jewish History and Culture in Harbin, the participants visited the exhibition “Jews in Harbin” with great interest. It was the first large-scale comprehensive exhibition on Jews in Harbin within and outside China. The exhibition was then moved to the newly renovated Harbin New Synagogue for permanent exhibition, and changed its name to “the Harbin Jewish History and Culture Exhibition”. In December 2005, in remembrance of the 60th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the rescue of Jewish refugees in Shanghai, the exhibition “Shanghai: Haven for the Victims of the Holocaust—Jewish Refugees in Shanghai” was held by the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai and others, which vividly illustrated how Shanghai people accepted and helped Jewish refugees in World War II, coinciding with the International Symposium “Jewish Refugees in Shanghai”. In October 2006, this photo exhibition was also held in Vienna, the capital of Austria, and Warsaw, the capital of Poland, causing a great sensation. In September 2007, the exhibition on Dr. Ho Feng-Shan coincided with the academic seminar in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Dr. Ho Feng-Shan’s death in Yiyang, Hunan Province, and then travelled to Shanghai and other places. In July 2008, the large-scale exhibition “the Jews in Modern China” co-organized by the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, the China International Culture Exchange Center and the Simon Wiesenthal Center was grandly opened in Los Angeles, the United States. The Chinese delegation headed by Wang Yingfan, China’s former Vice Foreign Minister, attended the opening ceremony and the activities, and were met by the Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Ramón Villaraigosa. The exhibition was warmly welcomed by the American Jewish communities, the overseas Chinese of the United States, and a wide range of American people, and given coverage by major media outlets in the United States. In order to coordinate many invitations from across the United States after these activities, the exhibition travelled to San Francisco in 2010. In December 2016, the exhibition was first showcased in Israel as the first event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel. Several exhibitions on European Jewish refugee families in Shanghai produced by the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum toured to the United States, Israel, Germany, Australia and other countries, and won favorable comments from visitors. In 2012, a batch of old photos on Shanghai taken by a Jewish photographer Sam Sanzetti was discovered by the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai. The Consulate General of Israel in Shanghai posted these photos on the website to find the real persons or their descendants and held an exhibition on these old photos, setting off an enthusiasm for the topic “Jews in Shanghai”. To mark the 70th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War, the museum was refurbished in 2015 and launched a new exhibition.

During the 21st century, many literary works, films and TV shows on “Chinese Jews” were released. In May 2005, in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the rescue of Jewish refugees in Shanghai,

the child drama *Finding Ilan's Father* on Jewish child refugees was staged in the China Welfare Institute Children's Art Theatre, as the first attempt to educate children about that history.<sup>18</sup> The docufiction *Last Refuge in Shanghai: The Love Story of Julie Chenchu Yang and Robert Reuven Sokal* written by the German writer Stefan Schomanmn, told the 60-year intercultural love story of a Jewish young man and a Shanghai woman and touched many readers.<sup>19</sup> In 2007, the biographical novel *Ina from China—or What is Already in my Suitcase* was dedicated to those friendly Chinese People who accepted Jewish refugees by the German writer Susanne Hornfeck, which described the friendship between the Chinese and the German Jewish refugees during World War II.<sup>20</sup> Besides, there were also many documentaries on the Chinese Jews, especially the Shanghai Jewish refugees. In 2015, or the 70th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, film works on Jews in China, especially Jewish refugees climaxed with the emergence of a number of documentaries. The China Central Television, Shanghai Television, Guangdong Television, Heilongjiang Television, Shandong Television, China Education Television, and television stations in the United States, Germany, Austria, Canada and other countries launched a batch of documentaries on Jews in China. Of these documentaries, the most influential one was the documentary *Survival in Shanghai* produced by the Radio and Television Station of Shanghai, which caused a sensation in New York at that time.

However, documentaries with similar content could no long meet the needs of audience and what audience wished for was drama film like *Schindler's List*. Famous film directors Steven Allan Spielberg, Ang Lee and Paul Verhoeven, Hollywood filmmaker Morris Mike Medavoy, Thomas Michael Keneally, author of the novel *Schindler's Ark* all had shown great interest in this topic and planned to shoot drama films on the Shanghai Jewish refugees. Steven Allan Spielberg, director of *Schindler's List*, initiated an oral history project to interview Shanghai Jews during the preparation of the drama film. Paul Verhoeven, director of *Basic Instinct* and *Black Book*, expressed his intention of collecting information in Shanghai and seeking professional support from the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai. To the surprise of many, the animated feature film *A Jewish Girl in Shanghai* produced by the Shanghai Animation Film Studio for children came out first and was nominated for the best history film of the 2010 Jerusalem Film Festival. With Pan Guang and Wang Jian as film consultants, the full-length documentary *Survival in Shanghai* produced by the Radio and Television Station of Shanghai won the first prize of the China News Award and the Gold Remi of the 50th WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival in 2017.

Apart from film directors, directors of opera, dance drama, Peking opera, symphony and other performances also expressed great interest in the theme of Jews in China. On September 3, 2015, at the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Shanghai Ghetto, the musical *Jewish Refugees in Shanghai* co-directed by China and Israel, premiered at the Shanghai Culture Square and was well received by the audience.

<sup>18</sup>Pan (2005a).

<sup>19</sup>Wen Wei Po, Feb. 18, 2009.

<sup>20</sup>Wen Wei Po, Mar. 1, 2009.

At the invitations from Israel, the United States and many European countries, the musical would tour across the world.

It can be concluded that the topic of Jews in China, especially the Jewish refugees, will remain high for the public and social media in a long time.

### 13.3 Unforgettable History

Academic researches, commemorative activities, arts and social awareness of “Chinese Jews” have echoed the international situation and the development of some regions and countries (including China) and have been tinted with political colors. Especially since the mid-1980s, prevailing international hegemonism and power politics have led to a new rise of neo-fascism, racism, extremism and terrorism. The clash of civilizations hypothesis has been rampant. Some people openly denied the atrocities of the Nazis and Japanese fascists. This made the topic of “Chinese Jews”, especially that of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, have an ever more important meaning for people to take the history as a warning, examine the present and avert similar tragedies in the future. At the same time, this topic, with its implication of Sino-Jewish friendship, plays an essential role in promoting the further opening up of China, especially Shanghai.

#### 13.3.1 *Important Visits and Commemorations in the Late 20th Century*

As early as 1986, a group of former Shanghai Jewish refugees headed by Kurt Duldner proposed to build a memorial plaque in the original Shanghai Ghetto in Hongkou, praising the friendship between the Chinese and Jewish people, in commemoration of that unforgettable historical chapter. The plaque reads, “During World War II, approximately 20,000 refugees from the Nazi Germany survived in this district. This plaque is dedicated to all the survivors and the hospitable and generous Chinese people.”<sup>21</sup> Jiang Zemin, the then mayor of the Shanghai Municipal Government, expressed support for this idea.

As mentioned earlier, the exhibitions on the Holocaust and the Shanghai Jews held in Shanghai at the end of 1991 created a desirable atmosphere for the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel. These two exhibitions were also a direct response to the denial made by some Germans and Japanese of the crimes committed by the German and Japanese fascists. Thousands of Chinese people visited the exhibitions, shocked by the Holocaust of Jews by the Nazis, and proud of the help offered to Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The visitors said that they should not

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<sup>21</sup>Pan and Jin (1991).

forget the historical tragedy and resolutely oppose any attempt to deny and tamper with historical facts.

In December 1992, Israeli President Chaim Herzog came as the first Israeli head of state to visit China after the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel. He said to Chinese President Yang Shangkun, "Chinese people helped us in the darkest period of the Jewish history. The Israeli people will never forget that."<sup>22</sup> An uncle of President Herzog had taken refuge in Shanghai during World War II and later died of an illness in Shanghai. In October 1993, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin visited China and made a special trip to the Ohel Moshe Synagogue and the original Shanghai Ghetto in Hongkou District. He once again expressed his deep gratitude to the Chinese people for providing a refuge for Jewish refugees.

In 1994, the Shanghai Municipal Government and Hongkou District Government established a monument in memory of Jewish refugees in Huoshan Park (formerly known as Wayside Park), the central area of Hongkou District where Jewish refugees lived during the war. They invited Jewish refugee representatives and Shanghai Jews from all over the world to attend the dedication of the monument and held an academic seminar as mentioned before. Rabbi Arthur Schneier, the leader of the American Jewish community, who led the American Jewish delegation to the dedication, said with excitement, "Schindler's list saved a thousand lives but Shanghai saved a whole community of many thousands."<sup>23</sup> In the following years, the Shanghai Municipal Government also allocated funds to restore the Ohel Moshe Synagogue in Hongkou District and the Ohel Rachel Synagogue on North Shaanxi Road. In the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, a photo exhibition of the history of the Shanghai Jewish community was displayed by the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai and other organizations. The Jewish Refugee Monument, the two synagogues, Peace Hotel (formerly known as Sassoon House), Shanghai Children's Palace (formerly known as the Kadoorie Villa), the Shanghai Eye and ENT Hospital (formerly known as Shanghai Jewish Hospital), Shanghai Conservatory of Music Office Building (formerly known as the Shanghai Jewish Club) and the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai have formed a group of Jewish-themed tourist attractions, welcoming visitors from all over the world every day. The Shanghai Municipal Government's tourism management department has made a map of those Jewish sites in both English and Chinese and the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai has launched a one-day tour of these Jewish sites.

In 1995, the 50th anniversary of World War II, there were many commemorations in Europe, but only one of them was closely related to China, that is, the aforementioned academic seminar and exhibition on Austrian Jewish refugees in Shanghai held in Salzburg, Austria. Intriguingly, just a few days after the event, the Austrian parliament passed a proposal to set up a fund to compensate for the suffering of Austrian Jews caused by the Nazis. In the autumn of 1995, Austrian President Thomas Klestil made a special trip to the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum during his visit to China. On behalf of the Austrian people, he thanked the Chinese people, especially Shanghai people, for providing shelter for Austrian Jewish refugees.

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<sup>22</sup>Pan et al. (1998).

<sup>23</sup>Pan (2005b).

According to Zhao Qizheng, the then deputy mayor of Shanghai (later director of the State Council Information Office) who accompanied the president during his visit in Hongkou District, President Klestil shed tears of excitement on several occasions. The 1996 exhibition on the life of Jakob Rosenfeld celebrated the Sino-Jewish and Sino-Australian friendship formed in the World Anti-Fascist War and remembered Jewish friends of immortal contributions during the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the Chinese People's Liberation War. The exhibition has continued relevance in the modern world.

Two events held in Berlin and Melbourne respectively in 1997 were also of special practical relevance. During the academic seminar and exhibition held in Berlin, a commemorative plaque was put up for the return of some Shanghai Jews to Berlin 50 years ago. At the unveiling ceremony, several spokespersons, including the representative of the mayor, unanimously stated that they should bear the history in mind and prevent the same tragedy from happening. It was during this event that many people repeatedly proposed the establishment of a memorial museum in Berlin for the victims of the Holocaust. Later, the German parliament and the government decided to build the museum in Berlin, which was completed at the end of 2004. The exhibition and academic event held in Melbourne focused on advocating the coexistence and integration of different cultures and celebrating the traditional friendship between the Chinese and Jewish nations. Some spokespersons declaimed against the anti-immigrant and anti-Asian racist ideas advocated by Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party. The extensive coverage and comments from Australian media on the event also expressed similar opinions.

At the turn of the spring and summer of 1998, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and First Lady of the United States Hillary Clinton visited the Shanghai Jewish sites. Prime Minister Netanyahu visited the Ohel Moshe Synagogue and the Jewish Refugee Monument in Hongkou District with great enthusiasm and repeatedly thanked the people of Shanghai for helping Jewish refugees. Hillary Clinton and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and the "Jews in Shanghai" photo exhibition in the synagogue. After the visit, Hillary Clinton told reporters, "So for this to be restored is a very good example of respect for religious differences and appreciation for the importance of faith in one's life."<sup>24</sup> Albright told reporters as she walked out of the synagogue, "I think that this really is a landmark trip in terms of the ability of the president and First Lady—and myself sometimes—to purely talk about what increasing freedom of expression might mean for China as it evolves and moves in the 21st century ... There were those who said he shouldn't go and then there were those who said he wouldn't have the guts to say when he needed to when got there and I think he proved them both wrong."<sup>25</sup> Such examples highlight the important role that the topic of "Chinese Jews", especially Shanghai Jews, plays not only in promoting Sino-Jewish and Sino-Israeli friendships, but also in enhancing China's relations with other countries, such as the US.

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<sup>24</sup>Pan (1998b).

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

In the spring of 1999, Israeli President Chaim Azriel Weizmann paid a visit to Hongkou District and the Ohel Rachel Synagogue in Shanghai. On November 3, 1999, German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder visited a photo exhibition at the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and wrote on the guestbook that “A poet once said death was a gang-boss from Germany, while many victims of German persecution found a haven in Shanghai. We commemorated this history and expressed our gratitude and appreciation to people who reached out to Jews.” The visit of German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder was of greater significance, for the majority of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai were from Germany or Nazi-occupied Europe.<sup>26</sup> Many years ago, German chancellor Willy Brandt who was leader of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, knelt down at the monument to victims of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and pleaded guilty to the Poles and Jews on behalf of Germany. Following the efforts made by Willy Brandt, German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder gave a concrete demonstration that Germans would never forget the tragic lessons from the Holocaust and resolutely reject any denial of this history so as to prevent the recurrence of racism and neo-Nazis. The visit paid by Gerhard Schröder to Shanghai showed that the German Government and Germans officially affirmed the valuable role of Shanghai in helping Jewish refugees and expressed their sincere gratitude to the Chinese people. Besides, His visit took place exactly when Austria’s pro-Nazi political party made progress in the general election and was seen as a unique response to this worrying situation in Europe.

Just a few weeks after the German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder’s visit, Li Peng, chairman of the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress, visited Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem. The museum curator informed him that trees were planted in and around the Yad Vashem, in honor of those non-Jewish individuals or groups who saved Jews during the Holocaust. After Mr. Li said to the museum curator that Chinese had also rescued many Jews in Shanghai during World War II, the museum curator announced on the spot that the museum would set aside space for an exhibition introducing Chinese efforts to rescue nearly 30,000 Jewish refugees and planted trees for the Chinese people.<sup>27</sup> Li Peng wrote down in the guestbook that “I extended my deepest sorrow to the loss of Jews in World War II.” He mentioned that “It was a disheartening fact that approximately 6 million Jews were killed by Nazi Germany during World War II. The war also resulted in over 30 million injuries or deaths of Chinese people. In the upcoming 21st century, all of us shall remember the painful historical lessons and avoid similar tragedies in the future.”<sup>28</sup>

The discovery and publication of Dr. Ho Feng-Shan’ heroic deeds during World War II mentioned above marked another achievement in this field. More than 50 years ago, when Jews were senselessly persecuted by the Nazis, many righteous people came out to help the needy. Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews by issuing them protective passports; the aforementioned

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<sup>26</sup>Pan (1999).

<sup>27</sup>People’s Daily, Nov. 30, 1999.

<sup>28</sup>ibid.

Chiune Sugihara, vice consul for the Japanese Empire in Lithuania, disregarded the objection from his superior and helped thousands of Polish Jewish refugees flee from arrest by the Nazis through issuing transit visas to them; the film *Schindler's List* depicting a German businessman Oskar Schindler, who saved the lives of Jews, was a box office success. After World War II, the Knesset of Israel passed a law, which stipulates that the Government of Israel shall, on behalf of the Jewish people, thank all non-Jews or non-Jewish families who saved Jews during the Holocaust and bestow the honorific "Righteous Among the Nations" on them. As of May 1, 1990, a total of 8611 people had been recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations".<sup>29</sup> Since then, the title had been awarded to more people, but none of them were Chinese, which was a pity to scholars who were familiar with the role of Shanghai in saving Jewish refugees during World War II.

Actually, the fact that a very large number of Chinese had contributed to the rescue of Jewish refugees is still unknown to many because of multiple and complicated factors. More than 60 years have passed since the World War II, and it has become increasingly difficult to find any related solid evidence. Scholars had thought about studying the then Chinese diplomats in Europe for further information, but only limited efforts were spent on this since they mistakenly believed that Jewish refugees could enter Shanghai without a visa from 1937 to 1939. It was until 1995 when I visited Germany and Austria that I learned Jewish refugees could not leave without a visa granted by a country. In Vienna, I was informed of the name and heroic deeds of Dr. Ho Feng-Shan by many Jewish refugees of those years. Since then, the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai had been actively seeking information about Dr. Ho Feng-Shan and sought help and cooperation from Jewish organizations and research institutes on the Holocaust around the world. The most motivated one among these organizations and institutions was the Visa for Life, which was closely associated with the Simon Wiesenthal Center. With many efforts, the Visa for Life successfully found Ms. Ho Man-Li, daughter of the Chinese diplomat, who lived in the United States, and some Jews who had received a visa from Dr. Ho Feng-Shan. Through multi-faceted efforts, the complete historic information on Dr. Ho Feng-Shan's heroic actions was collated and unveiled to the public in Vancouver. The details about Dr. Ho Feng-Shan are stated above and not repeated here. His story came out and swiftly caused a worldwide sensation. Many newspapers published his photos and heroic actions and hailed him as "the Chinese Schindler". In October 2000, after a thorough investigation conducted by the related Israeli departments, Dr. Ho Feng-Shan was awarded the honorary title "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. In September 2007, the Israeli government conferred the commemorative citizenship of the State of Israel upon the Righteous.

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<sup>29</sup>Gilbert (1993).

### **13.3.2 Important Visits and Commemorations in the 21st Century**

In the 21st century, the content and quality of visits and commemorations on this unforgettable history have continued to improve. The examples listed here are related activities with significant influence.

In April 2000, Chinese President Jiang Zemin was invited to visit Israel, who was the first Chinese leader to tour a principally Jewish state since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel. Israeli President Chaim Azriel Weizmann, in his welcome speech, underlined that never would Israel forget that European Jewish refugees found a safe haven in Shanghai and received warm welcome from local people in the most difficult time of Jewish history.<sup>30</sup> During his tour to Israel, President Jiang Zemin paid a visit to Yad Vashem and laid a wreath in remembrance of all victims of the Holocaust including Jewish refugees in China.<sup>31</sup>

In 2003, the 100th anniversary of the birth of Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld was celebrated across China. In this context, the commemorative stamp and Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld's diaries written in China were issued to the Public. Chinese President Hu Jintao and Austrian President Thomas Klestil both sent a letter of congratulation on the diaries' publication. In the congratulatory letter, President Hu Jintao wrote that "from 1941 to 1949, Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld dedicated his life to the liberation of the Chinese people. As a shining example of Sino-Austrian friendship, he and his achievements will live on in the history."<sup>32</sup> In September of the same year, during their visit to Shanghai, German President Johannes Rau and his wife, took time out of their busy schedule to visit the former Shanghai Ghetto. The president wrote down the following sentence in German in the guestbook "when the LORD brought back the captive ones of Zion, we were like those who dream"<sup>33</sup> through which he conveyed two meanings. The first was the condemnation of the Nazi persecution of Jews; the second was the appreciation of the help offered to Jews, here referring to assistance given by Shanghai to Jewish refugees. In late June 2004, Israeli Deputy leader and Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Ehud Olmert visited China to follow his father's footprints in Shanghai. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed as Israeli Prime Minister, which marked the first time in Jewish history that the father of a national leader was once a Jew in China. In early 2007, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert visited China once again and said to the journalist: "Chinese culture has become integrated into my family gene and was the very first memory in my childhood in Israel."<sup>34</sup>

As previously noted, a range of exhibitions and seminars were held in Shanghai, in remembrance of the 60th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the liberation of the Shanghai Ghetto. Around this period, Shanghai Municipal

<sup>30</sup>People's Daily, Apr.14, 2000.

<sup>31</sup>Pan (2005a).

<sup>32</sup>Kaminski (2003).

<sup>33</sup>Psalm 126, the Bible, this psalm depicts the joy of those captivated Jews when brought back to Mount Zion (Jewish holy land) in Palestine by the Lord.

<sup>34</sup>Xinhua News Agency, Beijing, Jan. 9, 2007.

Government officially listed Tilanqiao area as one of the twelve Jewish sites in Shanghai and organized professionals to bring those ancient buildings in Tilanqiao area into original conditions. Hongkou District Government also earmarked money for the renovation of the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum at the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue, preparing the museum to welcome domestic and foreign visitors with a new look. From 2005 till now, the Austrian government sends a representative of the Austrian Holocaust Memorial Service (AHMS) to the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai every year, as an alternative to Austria's compulsory national military service. To date, more than a dozen Austrian AHMS representatives have performed studies on Jewish refugees or other services at the center.

In April 2006, the “Rickshaw Reunion” was participated by over 120 Shanghai Jews and their relatives. This particular Shanghai Jews reunion has attendees of the second-, third- and even fourth-generation, with the youngest at 12, since many Shanghai Jews were of advanced years and it may be the last time for them to reunite in Shanghai. Apart from making a tour of old and new Shanghai, these participants visited the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai to exchange ideas with experts and graduate students, and attended a welcome banquet hosted by several Shanghai organizations to have communication with the government leaders, scholars, businessmen and representatives of the Shanghai Jewish community. Besides, they also returned to Hongkou District to visit their Chinese neighbors of those years and signed to support the appeal to UNESCO to declare the old Jewish ghetto a World Heritage Site. After the 10th anniversary of the death of Dr. Ho Feng-Shan in September 2007, another wave of commemorations on Dr. Ho was ignited in Washington, Shanghai and Vienna from May to October 2008. At the opening ceremony of the commemorative events held in Washington on May 21, 2008, the US Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad Chairman Warren L. Miller and the Chinese ambassador to the US Zhou Wenzhong delivered speeches, highly commending Dr. Ho's contribution.<sup>35</sup> On June 6, for the first time the US Senate passed a resolution honoring Ho's heroic deeds. In June and October of the same year, the unveiling of the commemorative plaques dedicated to Ho was held at the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum and the former Chinese Consulate in Vienna.

In 2015, the 70th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, a new round of commemorations was held on Jews in China, especially Jewish refugees in Shanghai. On September 3, 2014, the first official memorial day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum unveiled a 111-foot-long copper wall etched with the names of 13,732 Jews who found a haven in the Chinese city during World War II, and the names will continue to be added as the related researches move further.

In 2015, a series of important commemorative and educational activities were held during the new round of climax of seminars, exhibitions, films, TV shows and musicals mentioned above. On May 24–31, 2015, a lecture series on the 70th anniversary of the survival of Jewish refugees in Shanghai was jointly held by the

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<sup>35</sup>Wen Wei Po, Shanghai, May 23, 2008.

Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, the Shanghai Library, and the Shanghai World History Society, with every available seat taken. On June 23, the book press conference of *Jewish Refugees Memories: Their Experience in Wartime China* was held in the Shanghai Library for celebrating the anniversary. As a significant result of the research project “Jewish Refugees in China” funded by the National Social Science Fund of China, the book received wide coverage by domestic and foreign media. On September 6, 2015, the opening ceremony of the Jewish memorial in Shanghai was organized in Fu Shou Yuan. As China’s first memorial site fully displaying the life and experience of Jews in Shanghai, the Jewish memorial is free to all visitors and becomes a new historical and cultural landmark in Shanghai, promoting the Sino-Jewish friendship. On November 17 of the same year, the Forum Celebrating Shanghai: Haven for Jews in Holocaust in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Survival of Holocaust Victims in Shanghai was jointly held by the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai and the US-China Education Trust. The topic “Jewish refugees” continued to hold public concern in 2016. The German President Joachim Gauck, the US Secretary of Treasury Jacob Joseph Lew and other visitors toured the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum and expressed that they would always remember the lessons from this history.

Based on the foregoing, the history of Sino-Jewish friendship still shines with splendid brilliance in the 21st century. Many ordinary people dedicated their energy to restoring the unforgettable history through collating and studying the vast historical sources and the first-hand experiences of the victims, so as to ensure future generations could learn from history and strive for a better world. Their efforts promoted the mutual assistance and anti-evil practices in human history, and honored the integrity and benevolence shared by different cultures, making the long-standing relations between Chinese and Jews stronger and the friendship among nations deeper.

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## **Part III**

# **The Chinese Pattern of Haven for Jews during World War II**

Based on the major features of Jewish refugees in China during the Holocaust and a comparison with Jewish refugees in other parts of the world, the concept of “Chinese Pattern” is proposed and analyzed in this part to understand the significance of this pattern in that special history. The “Chinese Pattern” has five major features: 1. open cities offered havens for the Jewish refugees; 2. the new living environment was free from anti-Semitism; 3. the host cities had powerful Jewish communities already; 4. the Jewish refugees were well educated; and 5. they could survive thanks to the differences among Western powers.

# Chapter 14

## History of Jewish Refugees Before the Holocaust



Before the Holocaust, Jews had a history of dispersion for more than 2000 years. Understanding this history is crucial in studying the Jewish refugees in China during the Holocaust and studying the features of the “Chinese Pattern” of Jewish diaspora. For this purpose, three typical cases of great importance in the history will be discussed in this chapter, including: three great Jewish dispersions in ancient times; the Jewish dispersion due to anti-Semitism in Europe in the Middle Ages; and the Jewish migration to North America because of anti-Jewish violence in East Europe in the modern era.

### 14.1 Three Major Diasporas of Ancient Jews

Circa 2000 BC, Canaanites, a branch of ancient Semites, established some early states in a region which is modern-day Palestine. They were referred to as “Canaan” or the “Land of Canaan” in the Old Testament. Around this time, the Hebrews, another branch of ancient Semites and the ancestors of Jews, were living in Ur (now in Iraq) in Mesopotamia. According to the Old Testament, all the Hebrews migrated from Mesopotamia to Canaan following their chief Abraham in 1900 BC. Canaanites called these newcomers “Hebrews” which means “people who traversed rivers”. Also following Abraham, the Hebrews gave up polytheism and believed in the only God Jehovah, which is the origin of Judaism. According to legend, Jacob, grandson of Abraham, was given the name “Israel” which means “he who has wrestled with God”, referring to Jacob’s famous match with the angel of the Lord. Thus, the Hebrews are also known as Israelites. Because of drought and famine in Canaan later, Jacob and his people were forced to move to the Land of Goshen in the Nile Delta where they lived on farming on the fertile land and developed into a clan with twelve large tribes. The peaceful life of the Hebrews was not interrupted until Tuthmosis III became the sixth Pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. After that, the Hebrews were enslaved and had to do hard labor.

When the Hebrews were brutally abused by ancient Egyptians, the hero Moses was born. He fulfilled God's commission to liberate the Hebrews. Around the 15th century BC, Moses led the Hebrews out of Egypt and went to Canaan via Sinai. Exodus not only means that the Hebrews were delivered from slavery and regained their identity, but also marks the beginning of this new nation. When they passed Sinai, Moses claimed that Jehovah had told him ten instructions on Mount Sinai as the covenants that God established with the Hebrews, namely the Ten Commandments. These commandments became the fundamental tenets of Judaism and influenced Christianity and Islam as well. Based on Abraham's monotheism, Judaism—the first monotheistic religion in human history—was born in Sinai, which underlies the formation of the ethnic group of Jews. Among all cohesions contributing to the formation of an ethnic group, ethnic character is the most powerful and enduring one. For Jews, Judaism is absolutely the main part of their ethnic character. Judaism had remained the strongest Jewish ethnic cohesion when other ethnic characters weakened in diasporas.

Around the 13th century BC, the Hebrews settled down in the Jordan Valley and the mountainous areas nearby. In the 11th century BC, the Philistines along the Aegean Sea dominated the Mediterranean coast in Canaan and "Palestine" was their name for Canaan. In order to resist foreign invasion, the Hebrews ended the separation of tribes and established a unified nation. In 1025 BC, Saul from the tribe of Benjamin was selected as the first king of the Kingdom of Israel and Judah, marking the establishment of the first state of the Hebrews. David from the tribe of Judah, the successor of Saul, conquered the enclaves of Canaanites and banished the Philistines to the south coast. He made Jebus (later Jerusalem) the capital and then expanded the territory of the Kingdom to Mount Lebanon, the Egyptian border, the Mediterranean coast and east of the Jordan River. David also established Judaism as the state religion, unifying the twelve tribes into an absolute monarchy.

The kingdom reached its peak after David's son Solomon succeeded to the throne in 973 BC. King Solomon grew the kingdom's military strength and centralized power, while he established friendly relations with neighboring kingdoms through marriages and encouraged trade with them. In particular, he spent seven years building a magnificent temple known as the "First Temple", or Solomon's Temple, in the capital for God Jehovah. Jerusalem had become the sacred land for Judaism and the spiritual center for Jews, as well as a trade center. In the era of Solomon, the Kingdom of Israel and Judah was the richest land in the Middle East. The Hebrews shifted from semi-nomadic economy to agriculture gradually and gathered into an ethnoreligious group with Judaism at the core of their ethnic character. The Jewish national came into being roughly at this time.

After Solomon's death in 930 BC, however, the Kingdom split into the northern Kingdom of Israel with its capital in Samaria and the southern Kingdom of Judah with its capital in Jerusalem. The once mighty Kingdom of Israel and Judah declined in the battles between the north and the south, which was worsened by foreign invasion. In 721 BC, the Assyrians under Sargon II defeated the Kingdom of Israel, capturing Samaria and exiling the King and over 27,000 inhabitants. Afterwards, these inhabitants dispersed and were gradually assimilated by the host ethnic groups.

According to legend, there were Ten Lost Tribes. In 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Neo-Babylonian, laid siege to Jerusalem, finally destroying the city and the First Temple. Thousands of people from the Kingdom of Judah, including the king, the nobility, priests and artisans, were taken captive to Babylonia. This period in the Jewish history is known as the “Babylonian captivity”. The Kingdom of Israel and Judah fell. Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians took the Hebrew captive to their own country, making the first diaspora of Jews in ancient Palestine. The population of Jews in Palestine was exceeded by diasporas around the world.

In 538 BC, the Achaemenid Empire (the First Persian Empire) defeated the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid Empire, allowed the exiled Jews to return to their homeland and supported them to restore the Temple in Jerusalem, which helped revive Judaism. However, not all the exiled Jews returned. In 516 BC, restoration of the Temple of Jerusalem, known as the Second Temple, was completed. Not long later, Ezra the Priest reintroduced the Torah in Jerusalem. Torah is the first code of law of Judaism written down by Babylonian scribes, through which the teachings and canons of Judaism gradually formed a system. In 334 BC, Alexander the Great invaded the Achaemenid Empire and began a series of campaigns that lasted ten years. After the conquest, Alexander the Great expanded the territory of the Green Kingdom of Macedon to Europe, Africa and Asia. For the next 170 years, Jewish Palestinians were under Greek rule. In the vast territory of the Kingdom, conquered ethnic groups lived together, and hence the second Jewish dispersal began. During this period, while Jewish Palestinians dispersed to southern Europe, the Mediterranean islands, North Africa and Central Asia, Jews outside Palestine mixed up with other ethnic groups, giving up their wall of isolation. They were gradually influenced by Greek culture, religion and customs. As a result, a number of Jewish sages emerged, such as Philo of Alexandria who harmonized Jewish scripture, mainly the Torah, with Greek philosophy.

In 167 BC, Jewish Palestinians, led by the Kohen Mattathias and his son Judah Maccabee, waged the Maccabean Revolt against the Selue freed from foreign oppression and restore pure Judaism. After 25 years of bloody battles, Jewish Palestinians finally restored their religious freedom and established the Hasmonean dynasty, another Jewish state with Jerusalem as its capital. The dynasty had survived for nearly a century before the invasion of Pompey the Great of the Roman Republic in 64 BC. During 66–135 AD, several revolts erupted against Roman rule, known as the Jewish–Roman wars. Among others, the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–135 AD), led by Simon bar Kokhba, once nearly conquered Jerusalem, but was eventually defeated because they were outnumbered. Thousands of rebels were brutally slaughtered by the Roman army. In 135 AD, Emperor Hadrian reestablished Jerusalem as the Roman pagan polis of Aelia Capitolina, with Jews forbidden to enter, except on the day of Tisha B'Av. The revolts left more than 1.5 million Jews dead, and almost all the survivors fled or were expelled from Palestine. It was the third and the last Jewish dispersal.

Since then, Jews had remained stateless for more than 1800 years. In ancient times, in most parts of the world, no countries in the modern sense had been founded. Therefore, Jews in diasporas all over the world didn't need passports and visas to

travel across country border, so they could settle anywhere without restriction. Some of them were assimilated, while the majority were also forced to integrate into the host society. However, on the whole, they were connected by Judaism and Jewish customs which served the spiritual bond to keep their Jewish identity. The glory of the ancient Jewish states was passed down from generation to generation among the dispersed Jews all over the world. It became an indissoluble bond between Jewish diasporas and their homeland Palestine and inspired generations of Jews to revive their own nation.

## 14.2 Anti-semitism in Medieval Europe

After 135 AD, Jewish diasporas globalized. Most Jews left Palestine. Some of them migrated to Asia Minor, the Arabian Peninsula, Mesopotamia and North Africa. Others went to the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and other European countries. During the Middle Ages that lasted more than 1000 years, Europe was the main settlement of Jews. However, waves of anti-Semitism in Europe forced Jews to migrate and seeking for refuge.

In cultural terms, Jews had no freedom of religion and various false accusations and persecution had fallen upon them due to religious prejudices. In the Middle Ages, Europe was dominated by Christianity. The Church of Rome spread the false message that the Jews had been a nation cursed by the Lord. They tried to convert Jews to Christianity or imposed religious persecution against whoever resisted Christianity. In Spain, Catholic priests forced thousands of Jews to convert to Christianity with the threat of death. Those who converted usually continued to practise Judaism in secret and they were called "Marranos". Once they're labelled as heretics, the conversos would be subject to be torture and even burnt at the stake. What's worse, some Christians even made up groundless accusations against Jews. In 1144, a boy was found dead with stab wounds in Norwich, England. Jews were charged of crucifying the boy, a ritual murder. In consequence, most universities in Europe rejected Jews. Jewish cultural integrity was also disreputed. After the Trial of the Talmud in 1240, 24 carriage loads of Jewish religious manuscripts including the Talmud and Hebrew books were set on fire in Paris.

In economic terms, Jews were subject to restrictions and exclusion when they tried to find jobs and start business, and they were often deprived of their property without reason. European laws forbade Jews from owning land or property. The Christian Church banned Jews and their workers from working in the fields on Sunday while they didn't work on the Sabbath (Saturday) under Judaism. Besides, they were often expelled and couldn't settle down. Therefore, they couldn't make a living by farming. General restrictions were also imposed on Jews' handicraft business after the Craft Guild System prevailed in European Cities in the 10th century. When the European nations increased their capital in the late Middle Ages, Jews were marginalized in trade and finance. European rulers also blackmailed and plundered Jews by various means, such as heavy taxation, torture, deportation and even slaughter.

In political terms, Jews were seen as the worst offenders and the main scapegoats for European rulers. When the Mongols invaded Central Europe in 1241, it was alleged that the Mongols might have been descendants the Ten Lost Tribes. Therefore, Jews were held accountable for the Mongols' outrageous act in Europe. When the Black Death ravaged Europe in 1348, many Christians blamed Jews for the plague. Accusations spread that the Jews had caused the plague by deliberately poisoning wells, leading to a series of persecutions and massacre against Jews. After the outbreak of the Hussite Wars in the Kingdom of Bohemia, Jews were accused of supporting the Hussites. In 1226, the Polish government ordered that Jews be forbidden to live in the same areas with Christians. In 1516, the oldest European ghetto, a segregated area for Jews only, was established in Venice, Italy. Many other countries followed suit and forced Jews to live in such segregated ghettos.

Beginning in the late 13th century, waves of anti-Semitism rose in Western Europe. In 1290, King Edward I expelled more than 16,000 Jews from the United Kingdom. In 1306 and 1394, Jews were twice expelled from France. Since 1492, Queen Isabella I of Spain had expelled more than 200,000 Jews who had refused to be converted to the Roman Catholic Church. Later, Jews were also expelled from Portugal. The expelled Jews mainly fled to three regions: (1) the Eastern Orthodox Church regions in Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans outside the control of the Roman Curia; (2) the Muslim-majority regions in West Asia, North Africa and the southern Balkans controlled by the Ottoman Empire; (3) the Maghrebi Jewish community in the Maghreb region in North Africa (now covering Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) that were not fully controlled by the Ottoman Empire.

Bayezid II of the Ottoman Empire sent a navy to escort the Jews who had been expelled from Spain to the Ottoman territory. This might be the earliest large-scale rescue of Jews organized by a state government. These Jews settled mainly in Thessaloniki (now in Greece) and Izmir (now in Turkey), while many dispersed throughout the Balkans of the Ottoman Empire, including regions now in Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia. At the same time, other Jews also found shelter in the Maghreb region and the Eastern Orthodox Church regions in Russia, East Europe and the Balkans. It is widely speculated that some of the Jews who had entered the Ottoman Empire and Russia continued their eastbound journey along the Silk Road to Persia, Central Asia and further to China.

The mass expulsion of Jews in Spain, Portugal and many Central and Western European countries had far-reaching impacts. It is estimated that in 1490 the European Jewish population was 600,000, of which 570,000 (over 95%) lived in Western and Central Europe. By 1700, about two centuries later, there were 716,000 Jews in Europe, but only about 20% of them still lived in Western Europe.<sup>1</sup> The rest were settled and rooted in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Russian Jews and Jews in the Ottoman Empire were not included in the above estimates.

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<sup>1</sup>“Population”, *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Table 5, 1 page; Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, p. 702.

### 14.3 Anti-semitism in Russia and Eastern Europe and the Jewish Immigration to North America

The cyclical persecutions and expulsions of Jews in medieval Western Europe had driven a large number of Western European Jews to Central and Eastern Europe. By 1650, Poland had the largest Jewish population in the world. Poland had been partitioned three times, however, and the eastern region that had the largest Jewish population became part of Russia. Later, the Russian Empire continued to expand its territory, annexing Poland, Ukraine and Lithuania. As a result, Russia claimed the largest Jewish population in the world by the 19th century. At that time, there were about 10 million Jews worldwide, of which five million lived in the Russian Empire.

Starting in the late 18th century, the Russian Tsar government implemented discriminatory policies against Jews, mainly including two practices.

One was the setting up of a discriminatory “fence” that strictly limited the scope of Jewish residence and activities. In 1792, Queen Catherine II, in the name of preventing Jews from ruining the Russian society, created the Pale of Settlement in the newly occupied eastern Poland in which permanent residency by Jews was allowed and beyond which Jewish permanent or temporary residency was mostly forbidden. Later, during the reign of Paul I and Alexander I, the Pale continued to expand from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, including present-day Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Moldova and part of Ukraine. The Jewish population within the Pale increased from 1.5 million in 1825 to 5 million in 1897. Jews were not allowed to leave the Pale without special government approval. Even in the Pale, influenced by the government, the Orthodox and Catholic Slavs were prejudiced against and hostile to Jews. To make the situation even worse, in 1802, Alexander I forbade Jews to lease land or run pubs, and drove them out of the countryside. Many Jews had to move into cities, but could not get stable jobs because they were rejected by departments of public services. They became wanderers, and could only rely on low-paid odd jobs to make ends meet. Even anti-Semitic Russian newspapers admitted that the bulk of Russian Jews were slowly dying of starvation.<sup>2</sup>

The other was assimilation of Jews. The Tsar government lured or forced them to convert to the Eastern Orthodox Church. In 1817, Alexander I established the “Society of Israelite Christians” which gave a certain level of economic and legal tolerance to converted Jews and encouraged or forced Jewish children to attend public schools and learn Russian. But neither measure had produced any effect. In 1827, Nicholas I issued an edict of military conscription which required Jewish boys to join Cantonist schools from the age of 12 (later moved ahead to the age of 8) till 18 and then serve in the Russian military for 25 years. It was intended not only to recruit troops, but also to change the religious belief of Jewish boys through school education and military service. These practices devastated the boys physically and mentally. Jewish parents helped their children escape military service by concealing

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<sup>2</sup>Laqueur (1972).

age and even self-mutilation. However, the government sent spies to ensure no Jewish boys escaped military service.

In 1855, Nicholas I committed suicide when the Russian Empire was defeated in the Crimean War. His successor, Alexander II, launched reforms. He set free Russia's serfs and improved the situation of Jews. In 1857, he abolished the military conscription law that Jews hated and later allowed some Jewish merchants, college graduates, artisans, doctors, and veterans to live outside the Pale. Thus, Jewish communities began to appear in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Jews were also allowed to acquire land to develop agriculture. Some Jews even served as parliamentarians and lawyers in some regions, gradually becoming the upper class of Jews. In some sense, the government took the first step toward liberating Jews. At the same time, the Jewish Enlightenment originating in Germany gradually spread to Russia, advocating modern science, literacy and universal education. The movement endeavored to change the ideological basis of Jews so that they could integrate into the mainstream society in Russia. The situation of Jews in Eastern European states such as Romania, which were not under Russia's control, was rather similar.

However, massive anti-Semitism following the detention of a suspected Jewish woman who was thought to be responsible for the assassination of Alexander II plotted by the People's Will in March 1881 gave another stunning blow to Jews in the Russian Empire. After the death of Alexander II, Alexander III ascended to the throne and appointed Konstantin Pobedonostsev, a priest of the Russian Orthodox Church and a zealous Russian nationalist, as his adviser. Konstantin Pobedonostsev proposed cruel anti-Jewish measures, and insisted that "a third of Jews will be converted, a third will emigrate, and the rest will die of hunger." With tacit support from the Russian Tsar government, the attack, expulsion and massacre of Jews quickly spread from present-day southern Ukraine to the entire Empire. Between 1883 and 1884, a range of pogroms targeting Jews occurred in Rostov, Yekaterinoslav and Yalta.<sup>3</sup> In May 1882, Russian Jews were banned from expanding their residency beyond the Pale by the "May Laws", under which countryside residents were permitted to expel "guilty Jews". Nicholas II, son of Alexander III and heir to the throne, enhanced his father's anti-Semitic policies. Soon after his accession, he rolled out stricter constraints on the type of jobs and education for Jews, which exacerbated the persecution of Jews in the early 20th century. As the fabricated anti-Semitic text Protocols of the Elders of Zion circulated, propaganda against Jews escalated. As a result, massacres of Jews took place in many places such as Kishinev and Odessa.

This anti-Semitic wave beginning in the early 1880s made Russian Jews desperate. In the context of rampant anti-Semitism, the Tsar's hostility and the indifference of Russian intellectuals who claimed to believe in liberalism, the prospect of liberation and assimilation was bleak for Russian Jews. Tortured and scared, a huge number of Jews fled the Russian Empire. In the early 1900s, 50,000–60,000 people left each year. From 1903 to 1908, the number of fleeing Jews reached 100,000–200,000 per year. Between 1882 and 1914, about 2.5 million Jews escaped from the Russian Empire and regions controlled by it, of whom 80% went to America. Thousands of

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<sup>3</sup>Pogrom in Russian means the Holocaust reached the level of destruction.

them crossed Siberia to Harbin and Dalian, China. Many of the Jews in Northeast China again went south to Tianjin and Shanghai.

As a nation of immigrants, a melting pot, the United States generously accepted Jewish refugees. In fact, the influx of Jews did provoke some anti-Jewish sentiments as Christianity had a deep and widespread influence in the United States, but they were far less violent than those in Europe. After generations of hard work and keen business endeavors, Jews managed to emerge as a successful ethnic group in the United States and integrated into the mainstream society. Meanwhile, Russian Jews enjoyed an even more friendly and liberal environment in China where there was no Christian anti-Semitic tradition. They achieved quick success in business and culture thanks to the privileges China gave foreigners. They were the most active Jewish community in Harbin and Shanghai before the arrival of European Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis.

## Reference

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# Chapter 15

## Jewish Refugees During Nazi Germany: Aid to Refugees Outside China



Besides China, other countries also received Jews and gave some support to those who entered their territory. A comparison between China and other countries in terms of their support to Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis would benefit this research on the characteristics of the China Pattern.

### 15.1 European Countries' Aid to Jewish Refugees

Despite European governments' fear of direct confrontation with Nazi Germany, lots of individuals, social organizations, charities and officials in Europe showed sympathy towards the refugees and offered them help. Although Switzerland denied entry to some Jews, it had received about 30 thousand Jews in secret. Spain also took in some Jews and then sent them to Portugal and America. In 1939, France, the Netherlands and Belgium accepted hundreds of Jews aboard the SS St. Louis who had been forced to return to Europe by the United States. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) based in Switzerland got directly involved in the rescuing efforts, especially during the war. Because they had access to the areas controlled by the warring parties, the Red Cross staff played a special role in saving Jews from the Holocaust. Even though European Christianity held deep-rooted prejudices against Jews, many bishops and priests expressed support for Jews when the anti-Semitic riots intensified. Churches in France, the Netherlands and Belgium became safe asylums for Jews. After the outbreak of World War II, guerrillas in many places in Europe engaged in the rescue of Jews. Some diplomats also joined the righteous rescuers. The Consul General of the Republic of China in Vienna Dr. Ho Feng-Shan issued life-saving visas to several thousands of Jews in despair, as mentioned above. The vice consul for Japan in Lithuania Chiune Sugihara saved about two thousand Polish and Lithuanian Jews by issuing them transit visas to Japan. While serving as neutral Sweden's special envoy in Hungary, Raoul Wallenberg saved thousands of Jews from Nazi-occupied Hungary by giving them protective passports. Even some Germans secretly helped Jews. Among them was Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist, who

saved 1200 Jews during the Holocaust. The famous film Schindler's List was based on this period of his life. These are familiar stories while the following paragraphs will describe some less known rescue actions.

**The Swedish Red Cross Rescue Action** The White Buses In late 1944, the Norway representative to Stockholm Niels Christian Ditleff initiated a campaign to rescue Scandinavian prisoners held in German concentration camps, including Jews. In February 1945, the Swedish government sent the vice chairman of the Swedish Red Cross Folke Bernadotte to Berlin where he met several Nazi leaders including Heinrich Himmler, one of the most powerful persons in Nazi Germany. Himmler was initially negative to the transportation of prisoners to neutral Sweden, but accepted a revised proposal to assemble the prisoners in one camp so the Swedish Red Cross could support them. At this point, the Swedish government organized a rescue team on White Buses to Germany. The team was consisted of 250 volunteers from armed forces who wore the Red Cross emblem. They searched the German concentration camps one by one and collected most of the Scandinavian prisoners, including 400 Jews, by early April 1945. In mid-April, they arrived at Theresienstadt camp in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and their target was Scandinavian Jews. Having picked up 423 Jews, the White Buses headed for the Ravensbrück concentration camp and saved 7000 women, half of whom were Jews. The total number of prisoners saved varies by historians' estimates, but our own estimate is that the prisoners saved by the White Buses expedition were 20,000–31,000, among whom 5000–11,000 were Jews.<sup>1</sup>

**Raoul Wallenberg's Rescue of Hungarian Jews** In early April 1944, Adolf Eichmann, one of the Holocaust organizers, worked out a plan to transport Jews in Hungary into ghettos and grab their property. The deportation plan was scheduled to begin on May 15. However, news leaked before the deportation that most of the trains carrying Jews would head for Auschwitz, rather than Germany. The first transports to Auschwitz began in early May, nevertheless. The Schutzstaffel (SS) kept about a third of the Jews as forced laborers, and executed the rest in gas chambers. By July 9, 437,402 Jews were deported from Hungary. On July 7, the Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Horthy ordered to stop the deportation under increasing domestic and international pressure. A few days later, Raoul Gustav Wallenberg, Chief Secretary of the Swedish Embassy in Hungary, arrived in Budapest. Working closely with the diplomatic community in Budapest, he issued special protective passports to Hungarian Jews in the name of the United States War Refugee Board, with money raised by JDC. Jews holding the protective passports were identified as the Swedish citizens waiting to be repatriated. Although these documents were fabricated in urgent need, they looked official enough to be generally accepted by German and Hungarian officials. With the money from the War Refugee Board, Raoul Wallenberg rented 30 buildings in Budapest for the "Swedish" Jews before they were transferred to Sweden, and declared that the buildings were extra-territorial and protected by diplomatic immunity. The buildings eventually housed almost 10,000 Jews. Raoul Wallenberg risked

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<sup>1</sup>Crowe (2015, p. 527).

his life once again to rescue as many Jews as possible. As John Bierman recalled, “He climbed up to the roof of the train and began handing in protective passes through the windows which were not yet sealed. He ignored orders from the Germans for him to get down and continued handing out his protective passports to the hands that were reaching out for them. After he had handed over the last of the passports he ordered all those who had one to leave the train and walk to the caravan of cars parked nearby, all marked in Swedish colors. I don’t remember exactly how many, but he saved dozens off that train.”<sup>2</sup>

In January 1945, when the Soviet forces entered Budapest, 97,000 Jews were still living in two ghettos of the city. On January 13, Raoul Wallenberg asked for official talks with the Soviet officials. Four days later, he was called to General Malinovsky’s headquarters in Debrecen in Eastern Hungary to answer allegations that he was engaged in espionage and disappeared. In 1957, the Soviet government declared that Raoul Wallenberg, an American spy, had died of heart disease in a Lubyanka cell in 1947. However, several years later, a report about Raoul Wallenberg still insisted that he had been executed. Israel honored Raoul Wallenberg at the Yad Vashem memorial as a “Righteous Among the Nations”, and the US Congress made him an Honorary Citizen of the United States in 1981.

**Passports with Mendes’ Life-saving Visas Issued to French Jews** After Nazi Germany invaded France in spring 1940, the Portuguese consulate in Bordeaux was immediately flooded with refugees, all hoping to obtain a visa to flee the Holocaust. Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux, was a descendant of Jews. His father was a judge on the Supreme Court of Justice of Portugal. At that time, Portugal’s policy on Jewish refugees was very simple: Jews could enter Portugal on a tourist visa for 30 days, but settling was forbidden to Jews. What’s worse, the Jewish refugees were on the Portuguese list of “inconvenient or dangerous” foreigners and would be denied entry into Portugal. Impressed by the tragic crowd of Jewish refugees gathering outside the Portuguese consulate, Sousa Mendes decided to issue visas to all Jewish applicants. To his doubtful staff, he said, “My government has denied all applications for visas to any refugees. But I cannot allow these people to die. Many are Jews and our constitution says that the religion, or the politics, of a foreigner shall not be used to deny him refuge in Portugal. I have decided to follow this principle. I am going to issue a visa to anyone who asks for it, regardless of whether or not he can pay.”<sup>3</sup> Word of the consul’s magnanimity spread immediately in the refugee community in Bordeaux, which prompted a bigger number of Jewish refugees to hand in their applications for visas. To accommodate the massive influx of refugees, Sousa Mendes threw his home as well as the consul’s office open to them. His nephew, Cesar Mendes recalled, “From May 10, 1940 until the city was occupied, the dining-room, the drawing-room and the consul’s offices belonged to the refugees, dozens of them of both sexes, all ages, and mainly old and sick people … In the chancellery, they worked all day long and

<sup>2</sup>Bierman (1981).

<sup>3</sup>Paldiel (1993).

part of the night. My uncle got ill, exhausted, and he had to lie down. He considered the pros and cons and decided to give all the facilities to all the refugees, without distinction of nationality, race or religion, and bear all the consequences. He was driven by a ‘divine power’ (these were his own words) and gave orders to grant free visas to everybody.”<sup>4</sup> Learning of Sousa Mendes’ disobedience, the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered his immediate recall. Two official emissaries were dispatched from Lisbon to accompany the recalcitrant consul home. On the way to the Spanish border, they stopped in Bayonne, a city which came under the jurisdiction of the Bordeaux. There, as requested by the Portuguese government, the Spanish border police denied entry to petitioning Jews who held the visas issued by the Portuguese consulate in Bordeaux. At last, Sousa Mendes persuaded the Spanish border police to allow those Jewish refugees to cross the border. After his return to Lisbon, the Portuguese government summarily dismissed him from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and suspended all his retirement and severance benefits. Sousa Mendes appealed to the Salazar’s government, but to no avail. The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), a US-based Jewish relief organization, gave him some support and helped his two kids immigrate to the United States. In 1948, Sousa Mendes’ wife died. Six years later, Sousa Mendes passed away, forgotten, heart-broken, and impoverished. In 1966, he was posthumously honored as a “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem. In 1988, the Portuguese government reversed his punishments posthumously. In 1996, the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs restored Sousa Mendes to the Diplomatic Corps. That year, the Portuguese government decided to compensate his family for the damages. Later generations will always remember what Mendes said: “If thousands of Jews can suffer because of one Catholic, then surely it is permitted for one Catholic to suffer for so many Jews. I never regretted my action.”<sup>5</sup>

**Rescue of Hungarian Jews by Perlasca and Briz** In summer 1944, Angel Sanz Briz, head of the Spanish Embassy in Budapest, provided 200 Spanish Jews with Spanish passports, on behalf of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after negotiation with the Hungarian government. In Budapest, he would ask anyone who wore a yellow Star of David on the collars whether they had Spanish origin. In the end, he found only 45 eligible Jews in Budapest where most Jews were German. Therefore, Sanz Briz enlarged the scope of eligible Spanish passport applicants. Initially, he received authorization to issue papers to 200 Jews, but he discreetly changed that quota to 200 families, finally enlarging the number to 5200. The serial numbers of the passports, however, were all below 200, which helped them circumvent the Hungarian quota limit. From autumn 1944, to further protect the Jews who had received Spanish passports, Sanz Briz set up four special apartment buildings with the consulate’s funds and personal donations, marking these buildings as part of the Spanish Legation with Spanish flags, to house Jews and shelter them from Nazi persecution. Sanz Briz also hired an Italian Spaniard Jorge Perlasca to manage those shelters. After

<sup>4</sup>Milgram (2004).

<sup>5</sup>Milgram (2004).

Sanz Briz was ordered to leave Budapest due to the deteriorating Spanish–Hungarian relationship, Jorge Perlasca continued the rescue of the Jews. He made the false announcement that Sanz Briz was due to return from a short leave and that he had been appointed his deputy for Briz in the meantime. Later, Jorge Perlasca convinced both Hungarian and German officials that he had been appointed as the new Spanish consul, though he did not assume any official diplomatic post at all. One morning, Jorge Perlasca went to the Jozsefvaros Railway Station in Budapest to look for two Jewish boys who had just been taken by the Hungarians from a Spanish-protected building. In a group of Jews waiting for deportation, he found them and got them into a black Buick car with a Spanish flag. Just at this moment, a German soldier came up to him and ordered him to surrender the boys. Perlasca shouted at the German soldier, insisting that the car was extraterritorial, protected by international law. The German soldier pushed him away and tried to catch the children. Then, at a certain moment, a German lieutenant-colonel arrived and asked what was happening. He listened and then ordered the German soldier to do nothing more and let Perlasca to take the boys away. “Sooner or later,” he said, “we’ll get the children anyway.” The Swedish diplomat and rescuer Raoul Wallenberg, also present, later told Perlasca that the lieutenant-colonel was Adolf Eichmann. It was not the only time that Jorge Perlasca had confronted with armed soldiers. Another confrontation occurred when a batch of soldiers broke into a Spanish-protected building and took away a group of Jewish refugees. Then they forced the Jews to the Danube and planned to execute them there. Jorge Perlasca appeared just in time and threatened that he would cable and report to Madrid this brutal violation of Spanish rights, an act which would have grave impacts on the Spanish–Hungarian relationship. The ploy worked, and all those assembled Jews were saved and returned to the Spanish-protected building.<sup>6</sup>

According to historians’ estimate, Jorge Perlasca and Sanz Briz had saved about 5200 Jewish refugees. Both were honored as “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem.<sup>7</sup>

**Secret Assistance from Switzerland** Concerning Jewish refugees, Switzerland had no choice but to cooperate with Nazi Germany for fear of the invasion from Germany. In summer 1940, the Armed Forces of Nazi Germany planned an invasion of Switzerland called “Operation Tannenbaum”, but the plan was not approved by Hitler. During World War II, Swiss banks played a key role in the German–Swiss relationship. A large amount of Nazi gold, looted from the German-occupied countries, was circulated via Swiss banks. As is known assuredly, a large part of the Nazi assets had been deprived from the victims of the Holocaust.

On October 19, 1939, the Swiss government imposed tougher restrictions on Jewish refugees, including the expulsion of all the refugees that had illegally entered the Swiss territory. Some officials ruthlessly implemented the restrictions, while in many cantons such as Basel-Land, Basel-Stadt, Neuchâtel, Schaffhausen, and Graubünden, local officials managed to help the “illegal refugees” stay in Switzerland. However,

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<sup>6</sup>Gilbert (2003).

<sup>7</sup>See Crowe (2015, p. 521).

the Swiss government inflicted severe punishments on the officials who violated the restrictions. In spring 1939, Captain Paul Grüninger, Chief of the Police of St. Gallen, was dismissed from the police force after he falsified the visas of 3600 Jews to keep them stay in Switzerland. Although Captain Grüninger had been warned to stop the “illegal” activities many times, he continued his conduct according to the moral law. The Gestapo finally became aware of his activities and informed the Swiss Federal Authorities in Bern. Hence, Captain Grüninger lost his job, compensation and pension and lived the rest of his life in difficult circumstances. In 1971, Paul Grüninger was honored as one of the “Righteous among the Nations” by Yad Vashem. On that occasion his words of gratefulness were: “My natural inclination to help had its roots in my Christian beliefs and in my conception of the world. Although I got myself in difficulties in many cases, there was always a way to get through. I felt God’s help in a powerful and abundant way.”<sup>8</sup>

Despite the Swiss government’s attempt to limit the influx of Jewish refugees, the country’s policy on refugee immigration adjusted frequently as the war situation changed. On August 4, 1942, to prevent the arrival of new immigrants, the Swiss government issued a new policy demanding that immigrants, mostly Jews, must be expelled from the Swiss territory for security and economic reasons, that political refugees who enjoyed the benefit of the exemption clause would not be sent home, and that those who had fled to Switzerland for racial reasons, such as Jews, would not be treated as political refugees. However, at a meeting of the Swiss Federal Authorities in Bern in August, most police officers agreed to treat Jews as political refugees but without the benefit of the exemption clause due to diplomatic and political considerations. At a meeting in Zurich in the same month, Eduard von Steiger, Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police, explained that his department had used the above adaptation because there was no extra space on the Swiss “lifeboat”. In late 1942, after the German occupation of Vichy France, Switzerland further tightened immigration control, denying the entry of all Jewish refugees. In the following years, the immigration policy continued to change. However, it was the vague and changeful policy that allowed communities in Switzerland to come up with every possible countermeasure to help as many Jewish refugees as possible.

During World War II, approximately 295,000 refugees had entered the Swiss territory, including 51,129 civilians without entry visas and more than 21,000 Jews. During the Holocaust, about 30,000 Jews found shelter in Switzerland.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Baruch Tenembaum, “The Example of Grüninger,” International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, p. 2, <http://www.raoulwallenberg.net/en/saviors/others/example-gr-uuml-n>.

<sup>9</sup>See Crowe (2015, p. 530).

## 15.2 Aid of the United Kingdom and the United States to Jewish Refugees

The policy of the United Kingdom and the United States toward Jewish refugees wavered after the Nazis began anti-Jewish persecution in 1933. Due to economic crisis and surging unemployment, protectionism, populism and isolationism spread throughout the world. In the United Kingdom, the mainstream opinion was strictly restricting or even rejecting the entry of immigrants, including Jewish refugees. The British government not only restricted the entry of Jewish refugees, but also issued the White Paper of 1939 to unite Arabs against Nazi Germany and Italy. The White Paper stated Jewish immigration to Palestine under the British Mandate would be limited. Commonwealth countries including Canada, Australia, India, South Africa and New Zealand also adopted similar policies. The United States, which had a large Jewish community, also imposed restrictions on the entry of Jewish refugees. In May 1939, the US government turned away the SS St. Louis with 900 European Jewish refugees aboard. In 1940, the US Congress rejected a proposal to resettle Jewish refugees from Europe in Alaska. In 1941, the US Congress rejected a proposal to accept 20,000 Jewish children from Nazi Germany. However, on the other hand, full of hatred for the Nazis and sympathy for Jews, a lot of people in the United Kingdom and the United States, including righteous officials in the government, had managed to help Jewish refugees. Especially towards the end of World War II, as facts about the Holocaust were revealed, the urge to rescue Jews mainstreamed instead in the British and American societies, and both two governments adjusted their policies accordingly. Two cases of assistance will be discussed below: the Kindertransport to the United Kingdom and the Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter in the United States.

**Kindertransport to the United Kingdom** On November 16, 1938, five days after the Kristallnacht, the British government permitted the temporary admission of unaccompanied children under the age of 17 into the United Kingdom after a Cabinet debate. Later, a large delegation was formed representing Jewish, Quaker and other non-Jewish groups, which allied under the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany (later known as the Refugee Children's Movement). The Movement sent representatives to Germany and Austria to establish the systems for choosing, organizing and transporting Jewish children. In Germany, a network of organizers was soon established, and local youth volunteers worked around the clock towards the common goal of rescuing Jewish children from Germany. On December 1, 1938, the first party of nearly 200 children left Berlin and arrived the next day in Harwich. Transport out of Nazi-occupied Europe continued until the declaration of war on September 1, 1939, lasting only nine months. From then, the rescue efforts were forced to end. In addition to the children from Germany and Nazi-annexed Austria and Czechoslovakia, the United Kingdom also took in Jewish children from Poland and the Free City of Danzig. Rescues focused on Germany in the first three months and then moved to Austria, and then to Czechoslovakia from March 1939 when the Armed Forces of Nazi Germany entered Czechoslovakia. Rescues in Poland and

the Free City of Danzig lasted from February to August 1939, but only three train carriages of children were transported to the United Kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

It is worth mentioning that many independent British organizations, families and individuals had also participated in the rescue of Jewish children. For example, the Youth Aliyah and the Council for German Jewry sent hundreds of Jewish youth to the United Kingdom and then to Palestine for pioneering agricultural training programs. The Schlesingers rescued 12 Jewish children from Germany and then set up a youth hostel to house them. Nicholas Winton, a humanitarian and stockbroker dubbed as the “British Schindler” by the British press, organized the rescue of 669 children, most of which were Jews, from Czechoslovakia in the name of the British Committee for Refugees from Czechoslovakia. Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld was heralded as a Holocaust hero for personally rescuing thousands of Jews from 1938 to 1948, and transported as many as 300 Jewish children to the United Kingdom. As Britain continued to suffer from bombings during World War II, these children had experienced mass evacuations and resettlement many times.

After the war, about half of the Jewish children continued to live in the United Kingdom, while the rest migrated to the United States and Israel or returned to their homeland such as Czechoslovakia.<sup>11</sup> Kindertransport had rescued tens of thousands of Jewish children in total, but they were separated from their parents and relatives. It is worth mentioning that the parents of some of these children later fled to Shanghai and reunited with them after the war. Unfortunately, the parents and relatives of most children had been killed by the Nazis.

**Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter** In early 1944, American people were outraged by the news of the Holocaust. The pressure on the US government grew. The whole world was also hoping that the United States, which had the largest Jewish community in the world, would take charge of the Holocaust victims, especially the Jews. President Roosevelt therefore decided to establish the War Refugee Board to aid the civilian victims of the Nazi and Axis Powers, and was credited with saving approximately 200,000 Jews. On June 12, 1944, President Roosevelt announced his plan to create a free port in Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, where an emergency refugee shelter was established.

The US Special Representative Leonard Ackerman traveled to Italy to select refugees and then assembled those selected at the port at Naples. Their target group was refugees, mainly women and children, for whom no other haven was available, along with enough rabbis, doctors and skilled workers to keep the shelter running. Able-bodied men of military age were not included. On August 3, 1944, 982 refugees, mostly Jewish, from 18 countries (mainly from Yugoslavia, Austria, Poland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia) arrived in New York, and then took trains to the emergency shelter. Roosevelt circumvented the rigid immigration quotas by identifying these refugees as his “guests”, but that status gave them no legal standing and required their return to Europe once conditions permitted their repatriation.

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<sup>10</sup>See Wang (2014).

<sup>11</sup>See Wang (2014).

Without immigration status, the refugees could not leave Fort Ontario and were not able to find jobs or visit relatives who had settled in the United States. They managed to maintain a community in the shelter, but the segregated environment and their vague future put them under great mental pressure. People who were concerned with the refugees had been lobbying the Congress and the President to allow these “guests” to settle in the United States. In May 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered and the future of the refugees in Fort Ontario became an imminent issue. Most refugees wanted to stay in the United States, and 60% were awaiting immigration review. In February 1946, 18 months after they were admitted to the shelter, the Congressional Subcommittee finally voted to pass the bill to close the Emergency Refugee Shelter in Fort Ontario so that President Truman could allow the refugees to enter the United States legally. At the same time, President Truman eased the US immigration restrictions, especially on the victims of the Holocaust. A large number of Jewish refugees, including many Jews who had taken asylum in China, flocked to the United States and finally settled there.

Prior to that, many Jews had managed to enter the United States from 1933 to 1945 against all difficulties. The exact number of these Jews is known, but assuredly some of them were influential figures, such as Albert Einstein, the great scientist, and Henry Kissinger, who later became the United States Secretary of State. Only the 982 refugees at the Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter had been clearly documented, although a minority of them were not Jews.<sup>12</sup>

### 15.3 Latin American Countries’ Aid to Jewish Refugees

Although far away from Eurasia, Latin America was nonetheless impacted by World War II as European Jewish refugees tried to seek asylum on this distant continent. Before 1941, only the Dominican Republic opened its door to Jewish refugees. After 1941, many Latin American countries began to accept Jewish refugees as facts of the Holocaust continued to be revealed. After World War II, Latin America became a new settlement for many European Jewish refugees, including those from China.

**The Dominican Republic** In July 1938, an international conference concerning the issue of Jews fleeing persecution in Germany was held in Évian, France. Among the 32 participating countries, only the Dominican Republic offered to accept Jewish refugees. Historians believe that Rafael Trujillo, the dictator of the Dominican Republic, was willing to accept Jewish refugees for two reasons. One was to improve his own image in the “civilized world”, since his massacre of tens of thousands of Haitians had been strongly condemned. The other was to “whiten” his nationals because he believed that these “whites” from Europe would “make” lighter-skinned children. Learning that the Dominican Republic would accept the Jews who were willing

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<sup>12</sup>Marks (1946). This is the official history of Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter from its beginning in 1944 to its end in 1946 which also includes data on the resettlement of residents in the Shelter after that.

to engage in agriculture, JDC immediately set up a special organization called the Dominican Republic Settlement Association (DORSA). JDC subsequently funded DORSA's acquisition of 26,000 ha of land that had been reclaimed as banana plantations in Sosúa, a town of the Dominican Republic. On January 30, 1940, DORSA signed an agreement with the Trujillo regime. The agreement reads: "The Dominican Republic ... agrees to give the settlers and their descendants full opportunities to continue their life and work, to protect them from harassment, discrimination or persecution, and to give them full religious freedom ... civil, legal and economic rights, and other human rights."

Although the Dominican Republic had become a destination for European Jewish refugees, migration was made extremely difficult by the submarine warfare in the Atlantic Ocean and the lack of ships due to the Allies' need to transport troops and supplies. In the first year, only 50 Jews arrived in the Dominican Republic. They were treated very well and really free from anti-Semitism then raging in Europe. They settled in Sosúa, then a coastal town in the jungle, where each family would receive 80 ha of land, 10 cows, a donkey and a horse. The DORSA invited Kibbutz experts from Palestine to teach immigrants in Sosúa about collective farming. The experts also helped them design and build meat processing plants, butter and cheese factories and recommended planting lemon grass for extracting perfume oil.

Although crossing the Atlantic Ocean became more difficult after the United States joined the war, some immigrants still arrived in the Dominican Republic. In October 1941, the Nazis banned Jews from emigrating from the German-occupied regions of Europe. At that time, the Jewish population in Sosúa peaked at 500 and DORSA had invested about one million USD there. In 1944, the situation in Sosúa further improved. The DORSA gave up collective farming and allowed settlers to engage in private operations. Since then, Jewish settlers had focused on animal husbandry and the production of butter and cheese. Their life became more affluent. After the war, although some Jews moved to the United States and Israel, others chose to stay. 25 Jewish families remained in Sosúa. They supplied most of the butter and cheese in the Dominican Republic.

The last line of the exhibition in the museum beside the Sosúa synagogue is "Sosúa, established with pain, developed with love, and will ultimately represent the triumph of life."<sup>13</sup>

**Bolivia** There were three reasons why other Latin American countries were unwilling to accept Jewish refugees before 1941: first, these countries were afraid that new immigrants would drive up domestic unemployment, which could deter their national economy from recovering from the world economic crisis; second, Germans in Latin American countries were sympathetic with anti-Semitism because of the influence of racism and Nazi ideology, which affected government decisions; and third, some countries implemented restrictions on immigration to generate public support. After 1941, however, outrageous news of the Holocaust came, making some Latin American countries change their attitudes toward Jewish refugees. Bolivia had the most

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<sup>13</sup>Loval (2010).

obvious change, which had a lot to do with the Jewish mining tycoon Mauricio Hochschild who controlled one-third of Bolivia's mineral resources and had a close relationship with the Bolivian president. After its war with Paraguay, the Bolivian government was eager to revive its economy by attracting European immigrants. Mauricio Hochschild seized the opportunity to evacuate Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria via five Bolivian embassies in Europe. After arriving in Chile by sea, the refugees took a train called the "Jewish Express" to Bolivia.<sup>14</sup> With the JDC's help, Mauricio Hochschild provided a range of facilities and services to them. The JDC Archives shows that Mauricio Hochschild, the Sociedad Colonizadora de Bolivia (SOCOBO) and the JDC jointly contributed USD 160,000 to train the Jewish refugees and engage them in farming.<sup>15</sup> Later, many Jewish refugees crossed the borders to its neighboring countries, particularly Argentina. It is estimated that Bolivia received more than 20,000 Jewish refugees and immigrants from 1941 to 1948.

**Mexico** When the Nazis intensified their persecution of Jews, Gilberto Bosques Saldivar, Mexico's diplomat in Marseilles, France, directed consular employees to issue a visa to anyone wanting to flee to Mexico. Under his auspices, thousands of Jews and other refugees were saved. Bosques Saldivar also rented a castle and a summer holiday camp near Marseilles to house refugees, and insisted that those areas were Mexican territory according to the international law. In 1943, Bosques Saldivar, his family (his wife and three children) and 40 consular employees were arrested by the Gestapo and detained in Germany for a year. Later, he was released under an agreement between the German and Mexican governments for exchanging prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

**El Salvador** In 1938, Colonel José Arturo Castellanos, El Salvador's consul in Hamburg, understood the grave situation of Jews in Germany and requested his superiors to permit him to issue visas to Jews but his request was rejected. On January 2, 1939, he wrote again to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, describing the worsening situation of Jews in order to change their minds. Yet, he still did not get permission. In 1941, Colonel Castellanos became the consul general in Geneva. Seeing the despair of Jews, he decided to defy his superiors' instructions and issue certificates of Salvadoran citizenship to thousands of Jews to protect them from being sent to Auschwitz. These Jews did not know El Salvador, and even could not speak Spanish, but the citizenship of a neutral country did protect them. George Mandel, a Hungarian Jewish businessman, worked closely with Colonel Castellanos before the outbreak of World War II in 1939 and gave himself an Italian name Mantello. Colonel Castellanos gave Mantello the post as the First Secretary to the consul. With Colonel Castellanos's permission, Mantello issued papers of Salvadoran citizenship to thousands of European Jews. In May 1944, regime changed in El Salvador and the new president agreed

<sup>14</sup>Cárdenas, José Arturo. March 16, 2017. <http://www.timesofisrael.com/decades-after-he-died-pre-wwii-files-reveal-unlikely-heroism-of-bolivian-schindler/>.

<sup>15</sup>"Uncovering Jewish History in Bolivia." *JDC Archives*, <http://archives.jdc.org/uncovering-jewish-history-in-bolivia/>. Accessed 18 May 2017.

<sup>16</sup>Katz (2000).

with some Western countries that rescue measures should be taken to help Hungarian Jews. Henceforth, Colonel Castellanos' rescue efforts were finally recognized and supported by his government. On May 3, 2010, Colonel Castellanos was honored as one of the "Righteous Among the Nations" by the Yad Vashem.<sup>17</sup>

After World War II, Latin America became an important destination for Holocaust survivors. More than 20,000 homeless Jews migrated to Latin America. Their main destination was Argentina which already had an active Jewish community. Many other Jews, including a number of Jews who had taken asylum in China, went to Bolivia, Mexico, El Salvador, Brazil, Paraguay, Panama, Chile and Costa Rica.

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<sup>17</sup>"The Righteous Among The Nations: Castellanos Jose." *Yad Vashem*. Web. 21 May 2017. <http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/family.html?language=en&itemId=5604975>.

# Chapter 16

## Characteristic I of the “Chinese Pattern”: Open Big Cities as the Main Havens for Jewish Refugees



In the United States and some European countries, Jewish refugees were housed in shelters, while those in Latin American countries were arranged to engage in farming and mining. On the contrary, almost all Jewish refugees in China lived in big cities which were open, politically liberal, and culturally inclusive and diverse. This chapter is a case study of several Chinese cities: Shanghai, Hong Kong, Harbin, Tianjin, Dalian and Qingdao.

### 16.1 Big Cities That Had Developed in the Open Environment

Shanghai, Hong Kong, Harbin, Tianjin, Dalian and Qingdao were forced to open up to the outside world after invasion by Western powers, and had grown up subsequently.

**Shanghai** The majority of Jewish refugees in China had landed in Shanghai, one of China's open metropolises and the largest of its kind. On November 17, 1843, under the Treaty of Nanking and the General Regulations of Trade, Shanghai became a treaty port. China's center for international trade gradually shifted from Guangzhou, at the estuary of the Pearl River, to Shanghai, at the estuary of Yangtze River. The subsequent influx of foreign goods and capital gave birth to broker's storehouses, docks, concessions and banks. By the 1930s, Shanghai had become the trade and commercial hub for international businesses and the most prosperous commercial center in the Asia-Pacific region. Domestic migrants from Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Jiangxi, Shandong, Guangdong and Fujian and foreign immigrants from the United Kingdom, the United States, France, German, Japan and the Russian Empire had made joint contributions to the city's growth and prosperity. Sitting on the south edge of the Yangtze River's estuary in the middle portion of China's eastern coast, Shanghai neighbors a number of prosperous cities boasting strong cultural heritage and flourishing economy, including Suzhou, Hangzhou and Nanjing. The city can extend its influence to broader regions like Hunan, Hubei, Sichuan, Shandong, Henan,

Hebei and Shanxi and Chongqing. Shanghai is not far away from countries like Korea, Japan, the Philippines and Singapore. It's no wonder Shanghai could emerge as the largest metropolis in the Far East over a relatively short span of time. As a result, Haipai culture was developed. Shanghai's industry and commerce also became prosperous. In Shanghai, there were four great department stores, such as Sincere and Wing On which were household names, and a variety of outstanding businesses like Tien Chu Ve-Tsin Chemical Limited and the San Yu Factory.

In 1845, the area north of Yangjingbang Creek in Shanghai County was designated as a residential quarter for foreigners and became the British Concession. In 1848, Hongkou district became the American Concession. In 1849, the area north of Shanghai County and south of the British Concession became the French Concession. In 1863, the British and American concessions merged into the Anglo-American Settlement, which was renamed the International Settlement in 1899. Since then, the size of concessions in Shanghai had enlarged many times. In May 1899, the size of the International Settlement enlarged dramatically to 22.59 km<sup>2</sup>, reaching the border line of Shanghai and Bashan Counties on the north and Jing'an Temple on the west. The International Settlement was divided into the central, northern, eastern and western districts. By 1900, Shanghai had a population of over one million. Since then, Shanghai has been the largest city of China. In 1919, Shanghai's population was equivalent to the total population of Suzhou, Chongqing, Hong Kong and Chengdu. In 1947, the population of Shanghai was three times greater than Beijing and four times than Nanjing. Shanghai was incredibly important in China in economic terms. In 1936, all the headquarters of foreign banks in China were located in Shanghai. Besides, 58 Chinese banks were based in Shanghai, accounting for 35% of the country's total. Before the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, Shanghai had 81.2% of the total import and commerce, 79.2% of the total investment in banks, 67.1% of the total investment in industry and 76.8% of the total investment in real estate by foreigners, excluding China's three northeastern provinces. Shanghai's total trade with all treaty ports in China accounted for 75.2% of the country's total in 1936, and 88% in 1940.<sup>1</sup>

**Hong Kong** Some Jewish refugees went to Hong Kong, an open metropolis under the British rule. Under the 1842 Treaty of Nanking, the Qing government agreed to cede Hong Kong Island to the United Kingdom, making it a crown colony. In October 1860, the Qing government was forced to cede the area of the Kowloon Peninsula south of Boundary Street to the United Kingdom under the Convention of Peking. In 1898, the Qing government was again forced by the United Kingdom into a 99-year lease of the part of Kowloon north of Boundary Street and its surrounding islands. The lease expired on 30 June, 1997 under the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory. As a result, the development of Hong Kong extended beyond the Island. In 1851, the Taiping Rebellion broke out. A great number of businessmen in South China fled to Hong Kong to escape the revolt. The population of Hong Kong

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<sup>1</sup> Xiong Yuezhi, “The Role of Treaty Ports in Forming the Characteristics of Shanghainese”, Oriental Morning Post, 19 November 2013.

increased from about 33,000 in 1851 to more than 120,000 in 1865. Hong Kong became a transit point not only for the cargos, but also for emigrants from South China. From 1851 to 1900, more than 2 million people from Guangdong and Fujian emigrated or were transported overseas as “coolies” via Hong Kong. After becoming a free port, Hong Kong gradually replaced Canton (Guangzhou) as the main entrepot of China. A number of British firms were established in Hong Kong, which attracted many Chinese to engage in trade-related businesses, such as transportation. Some Chinese businessmen also came to Hong Kong and set up firms that transported goods between southern and northern China via Hong Kong. In addition to trade, banking and stock markets also boomed in Hong Kong, laying the foundation for Hong Kong to become an international financial center. Better still, whenever an unrest occurred in mainland China, many dignitaries and wealthy businessmen would flock to Hong Kong along with their wealth and business. Later, when the mainland’s economy developed and thrived, both Chinese and foreign businessmen and scholars took Hong Kong as a bridge and a base for their future development in China. By the 1930s, Hong Kong had established ties with not only South China and the whole of mainland China, but also East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Middle East, and even Europe and North America. In short, Hong Kong had become a large and open metropolis with almost a million permanent residents or migrants and offered easy access.

**Harbin** Some Jewish refugees fled to Harbin via the Soviet Union or Shanghai. At that time, Harbin belonged to Manchukuo and was open to foreigners. In 1896, the Russian Empire forced the Qing government into the secret and unequal Li–Lobanov Treaty. Under the Treaty, the Russian Empire was allowed to build a Russian gauge railway through Heilongjiang and Jilin to Vladivostok, called the China Eastern Railway (CER). In 1897, the China Eastern Railway Construction Bureau moved from Vladivostok to Harbin. Consequently, a large number of Russians came to Harbin and settled there. After the Russo-Japanese War ended in 1905, Japan and the Qing Dynasty signed the Treaty of the China-Japan Conference on China’s Three Northeastern Provinces. Under its Supplementary Agreement, many major port cities in Northeast China, including Harbin, should be open to foreign traders within two years. As more and more foreign powers penetrated into China, the Russian Empire’s monopoly in Harbin was ended, with more than 20 countries setting up their consulate offices or Consulate Generals in the city. The construction of CER catalyzed the state-run and Chinese machine-making industry in Harbin while the opening of treaty ports fueled the rapid development of national industry and commerce. More than 1000 state-owned, private and state-private businesses emerged in Harbin, including Tung Gee Co. which excelled both in manufacturing and commerce. Meanwhile, a great deal of commercial capital flowed into Harbin. Most of it came from the Russian Empire, while the rest came from Europe, the United States and Japan. The influx contributed to the emergence of modern large and medium-sized companies. For instance, the Russian-owned Churin Company, the largest of its kind in Northeast China, was not only a large department store that operated in both wholesale and retail markets, but also a major import and export company. It offered a huge portfolio

of goods, especially world-renowned premium goods. It also had black tea, wine, sausage, cigarettes and other plants. The construction of CER and the opening of treaty ports also fueled the rapid population growth in Harbin. In 1903, the population of Harbin, including permanent residents and migrants, was only around 70,000. In 1923, Harbin's total population came to nearly 500,000. At that time, Harbin, dubbed as Oriental Moscow, had become an international city, a place where East meets with West, which facilitated the interaction among different cultures. The influx of Western technologies and cultures changed the way of life of the locals. The emergence of trains, films, telegrams, telephones and other products of the industrial revolution in the West and the wide circulation of newspapers had an important influence on the locals.

**Tianjin** There were also hundreds of Jewish refugees who fled to Tianjin (formerly Tientsin). These refugees arrived in Tianjin via either Shanghai or Harbin. In 1860, the United Kingdom, the French Empire, and the Russian Empire forced the Qing government into the Convention of Peking. Under the Convention, Tianjin became a treaty port. Since then, Tianjin had been an important base for foreign powers to dump goods, plunder raw materials and export capital to China. The United Kingdom, France, the United States, Germany, Japan, Austria, Italy, Russia and Belgium successively grabbed their own concessions in Tianjin. At the same time, Chinese bureaucrats, compradors and merchants also came to Tianjin where they purchased properties and started businesses. As a result, Tianjin became a gathering place and colony of politics, economy and culture. After the Xinhai Revolution (also known as the Revolution of 1911), many royals of the Qing Dynasty, including the last Emperor Puyi, also built residences in Tianjin and often traveled between Beijing and Tianjin. As a treaty port, Tianjin gradually became the gate to northern China and the base for the Self-Strengthening Movement, a movement of institutional reforms. The city pioneered in promoting military modernization, railway, telegraph, telephone, postal services, mining, modern education and justice. At that time, Tianjin was not only one of the major industrial and commercial cities in China, but also the largest financial and business center in northern China. Industrial businesses in Tianjin were run by the Qing government, foreigners, and Chinese merchants, such as the government-run Pei Yang Arsenal, the Sino-foreign joint venture Kailuan Coal Mine and Chinese owned firms like Yilaimou Flour Mill, Chee Hsin Cement Company and Pei Yang Tobacco Factory. In the sphere of trading, the influx of foreign goods and the outflow of Chinese native products through Tianjin were both apparent, which made the city a busy hub for imports and exports in northern China. Thanks to its open regulatory environment, Tianjin's financial industry developed rapidly and Tianjin became the financial center of northern China. In education, in addition to official military, scientific and technological and medical schools the reformers set up during the Self-Strengthening Movement, schools set up by foreign churches and Chinese private sector also boomed, obviously lifting the level of education in Tianjin, especially women's education and secondary education. Besides, opening up as a treaty port had led to the rise of the newspaper industry in Tianjin. Newspapers and

magazines, most notably the Chinese Times and the Ta Kung Pao, had an influence on the development of local culture and played a key role in enlightening the locals.

**Dalian** Some Jewish refugees who had planned to leave Russian Empire for Shanghai finally settled in Dalian, a port city in northern China, due to the hard journey on the sea. Russia had its warships steam into Lvshun in the name of protecting the interests of the Qing government in winter 1897. In 1898, Russia forced the Qing government into the Pavlov Agreement which allowed Russia's entry into Lvshun and permitted it to develop commerce and trade in the city. Gradually, Russian missionaries, merchants, engineers and workers came and settled in the city. In the early 20th century, Dalian's urban population was predominated by immigrants, including a large number of Russians. The Chinese population were mainly migrants from southern Liaoning, Shandong, Heilongjiang and Jilin. In order to profit more from shipping and foreign trade in the Far East, Russia turned Dalian into a free-trade port. After the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Japan took over Russia's control of Dalian. In 1906, the Japanese government announced the opening of Dalian to international trade, making Dalian an international trade center in northeast China. Trade between Dalian and China's other coastal cities, Japan, Korea, Russia as well as other Asia-Pacific regions boomed. It even traded with European and North American regions. Maritime trade also created a positive spillover effect in northeast China and in the areas west of Shanhaiguan and east of Jiayuguan. By 1919, Dalian had become the second largest port in China after Shanghai. After the Russian Revolution, the connection between Dalian and the Soviet Union was cut off, but it gradually resumed as the Soviet-Japanese relation normalized.

**Qingdao** A small number of Jewish refugees went from Shanghai and Dalian to Qingdao, because they found it easier to make a living in this port city as there were many restaurants, hotels and stores targeting foreign sailors and tourists. In November 1897, Germany occupied Kiaochow and forced the Qing into the Kiaochow Lease Convention in March 1898. In September 1898, Germany declared Qingdao a free port, and began the construction of harbors and the Qingdao-Jinan railway. The boom of international trade turned Qingdao from a small fishing village into an international commercial port in North China. By 1910, Qingdao had replaced Yantai as the largest port in Shandong and the sixth largest in China, after Shanghai, Tianjin, Hankou, Guangzhou and Shantou. The German activities in Qingdao, such as building modern transport and communications infrastructure in the city, making urban development plans, improving public utilities, building Western-style houses, building churches and schools, and publishing newspapers and magazines, accelerated the formation, development and modernization of the city. Afterwards, the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, Japan and several other countries set up their consulate offices in Qingdao and the city began to attract foreign immigrants. Those foreigners made Qingdao a more diverse city after they had brought new ways of life. In November 1914, Qingdao was occupied by Japan after it declared war on Germany during World War I and the occupation lasted more than 30 years. By the 1930s, just like Dalian, Qingdao built close maritime ties with China's other coastal cities, Japan, Korea, Russia, Asia-Pacific regions, Europe and North America. Germany had a

strong influence in Qingdao. The well-known Tsingtao brewery, which had been started by Germans, was a good evidence. Early at that time, Qingdao was a popular tourist destination for both Chinese and foreigners.

To a great extent, Jewish refugees had been attracted to and settled in these big cities due to their openness and diverse cultural atmosphere.

## 16.2 Cities That Had the Tradition of Accepting Political Exiles

The big cities mentioned above were inclusive and had a tradition of accepting political exiles and refugees. Shanghai, known as “the paradise of adventurers”, was the best example. Shanghai opened its doors to foreigners since 1843. During the subsequent century, all immigrants and refugees, including Jewish refugees, could easily settle in Shanghai, especially in the foreign concessions. The examples below are Korean exiles after the Korean independence movement and Russian political refugees.

**The Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (KPG)** After Korean Peninsula became a colony of Japan in 1910, Japan annulled the Empire of Korea and set up the Governor-General of Korea. The oppressive Japanese rule gave rise to the Korean resistance movement against Japan, the “March 1st Movement”, in March 1919. On April 10, proposed by Korean activists in Shanghai Yi Kwang-su and Son Jeong Do, a meeting was convened at 22 Route Pere Robert (now Ruijin 2nd Road) in the French Concession. The meeting gathered 29 representatives of Korea and other parts of the world and decided to set up a Provisional Council as the supreme organ of power. At the same place, the first National Assembly was held the next day, where the Constitutional Charter of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (the Charter) was enacted. The Charter stipulated that monarchy shall be abolished and KPG be established. The Assembly also adopted the Policy Agenda, the Oath of Office, A Notice to All Citizens of the Republic of Korea and A Notice to Countries All over the World. Syngman Rhee was appointed as the Premier, who shall be responsible for the running of KPG. In December 1920, Rhee took office in Shanghai.

On May 20, 1921, Rhee visited Washington to seek support from Western countries for Korean independence activities, but during the visit he actually tried to consolidate his own power. Therefore, the Provisional Council decided to impeach Rhee in March 1925. Kim Gu succeeded Rhee as the head of KPG. Under the leadership of Kim Gu, Korean patriots carried out a series of anti-Japanese and independence activities in Shanghai. In addition to underground resistance, they also organized and implemented assassination of Japanese military and political leaders. The most famous assassin was Yun Bong-gil, who set off a bomb that killed

several Japanese dignitaries in Hongkou Park in 1932. Yun Bong-gil, a Korean independence activist, joined the Korean Patriotic Corps organized by Kim Gu after his arrival in Shanghai in the early 1930s. The Shanghai Battle broke out on January 28, 1932, and a truce was declared on March 3 through the mediation of the United Kingdom, the United States, France and Italy. After China agreed to sign an armistice in early May, the Japanese military celebrated their victory in Hongkou Park on April 29. Hearing the news, the Korean patriots were indignant and determined to give the Japanese invaders a head-on blow. That day, Yun took a bomb disguised as a water bottle to the celebration in the heavily guarded park. He threw the bottle at the Japanese dignitaries and killed and injured over 30, including Yoshinori Shirakawa, commander in chief of Shanghai Expeditionary Army.<sup>2</sup> The assassination attracted great attention in Shanghai and received widespread coverage on Chinese newspapers.

KPG moved to Chongqing after the full-scale War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression broke out in 1937. After Japan's surrender in 1945, KPG relocated to Korea. The Korean people would not forget their history in Shanghai: Korean monarchy was officially abolished and KPG was established in Shanghai; the first president, premier and ministries were elected in Shanghai; the first National Assembly was convened in Shanghai; the first Council was established and the first Constitution of Korea was enacted in Shanghai. The year of 1919 when KPG was established is regarded as the founding year of the Republic of Korea. A museum of KPG is located at 302–304 Madang Road, Shanghai. Since China and South Korea established diplomatic relations in 1992, each South Korean president has paid visits to the museum.

**White Russians in Shanghai** In 1917, the Russian Revolution erupted and it was followed by several years of civil war. After the Red Army's final victory in October 1922, a large number of Russians who were opposed to the new regime fled abroad. These Russians were known as the White Russians. They flooded into China and more than 200,000 of them arrived in Northeast China. The richer White Russians took Admiral Oskar Viktorovich Stark's fleet to Shanghai. On December 5, 1922, the fleet of 14 ships arrived at Wusongkou. However, the Chinese government and the authorities of Shanghai concessions were totally unprepared. The Beiyang government ordered to turn away the White Russians without special permissions. Admiral Stark then separated the Russians into small groups and tried to send them ashore secretly, but they were found by Chinese guards and were turned back to the ships. After the "smuggling" efforts failed, some White Russians requested permission to visit their friends and relatives in Shanghai. The Shanghai municipal authorities found it unreasonable to refuse their request, so they agreed to accept 1200 White Russians who had friends and relatives in the city. The rest took 12 ships with better conditions and headed for Manila.

A second group of White Russians, totaling 180 persons, arrived in Shanghai on March 14, 1923. A third group consisting of 700 persons arrived in Shanghai

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<sup>2</sup>Pan (2015, p. 17).

aboard the warship Eli Dorado on June 28 and stopped at Wusongkou. On September 14, two more warships, which were led by Glebov of the Cossack Corp, carried another group of White Russians to the Yangtze River estuary, where they joined the former warship. The Chinese navy inspected the two ships and found a large cache of weapons. Therefore, the Chinese navy demanded them to leave Shanghai within 48 h. In order to get ashore, Glebov deserted the warships and used small ships to smuggle refugees into Shanghai. More than 100 people landed. They soon bribed the concession authorities and rented a house in the French Concession for “health rehabilitation”. Then, they got the other Cossack soldiers to get ashore for rehabilitation. Meanwhile, Glebov found two deserted houses on the east bank of the Huangpu River near Wusongkou, which were the former offices for inspection and quarantine. He rent the houses from Xu Qiufan, Special Commissioner of Jiangsu Province in Shanghai, for the White Russians. By the end of 1923, more than 3000 White Russians had come to Shanghai. Among them, there were 700 orphans from Siberia and Khabarovsk Cadet Schools, in which 530 went to Serbia for further training after one year in Shanghai and later became officers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia while the other 170 settled in Shanghai. After a short relief, the Shanghai authorities were soon overwhelmed by the arrival of a large number of White Russians from Harbin who were poor refugees.

In 1925 when the White Russians felt hopeless, the major labor and anti-Imperialist movement erupted after the Shanghai Municipal Police fired at protestors on May 30, 1925, which was also known as the Shanghai Massacre of 1925. Glebov found that the imperialist forces in Shanghai were weak in the face of such a mass movement and the Shanghai authorities were at a loss. Thereafter, he boasted that his Cossack Corp was a very combatant team and could defend the International Settlement. Meanwhile the Shanghai Municipal Council was calling up the Shanghai Volunteer Corps and requesting foreign military assistance to carry out raids and protest vested interests. They also mandated Glebov and gave him a sum of money to set up the Russian Volunteer Corp. The money saved several thousand White Russians who were struggling to survive in Shanghai. The White Russians later became the major power of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps. The Cossack officers and soldiers received not only free accommodation and meals in barracks, but also salary almost at par with the staff of the Municipal Council. Shortly afterwards, the Russian Volunteer Corp was extended and became a regiment. Identifying the opportunity, other White Russians also sought help from Glebov and the Russian Consul General in Shanghai. At that time, many suspended factories in Shanghai had an urgent need for new employees to resume operation. Therefore, Glebov suggested substituting White Russians for the workers on strike. So the Russian Federation in Shanghai sent a huge number of White Russians to work in factories and foreign firms. Most White Russians got a job and received a high salary. As the news spread to Harbin, a large group of White Russians there went southward to Shanghai, driving up the number of White Russians in Shanghai to over 13,500. On April 12, 1927, the Russian Regiment joined Chiang Kai-shek and imperialist military forces in killing workers and revolutionaries, which was another Shanghai Massacre. To reward the White Russians for their “performance” in the massacre, the Chiang Kai-shek administration and the

Shanghai Municipal Council legitimated them as citizens of Shanghai and returned the tricolor flags of the Russian Empire to the Russian Regiment. By that time, the White Russians had built up a strong presence in Shanghai. In 1929, an armed conflict broke out between China and the Soviet Union along China's northeastern border, which drove more than 1300 White Russians to Shanghai from Harbin.

After the outbreak of China's War of Resistance, many White Russians joined the Chinese in the fight. The most famous Russian fighter was Morochkovsky. After coming to China in 1926, he first served as the commander of the White Russian armored vehicle corp under the warlord Zhang Zongchang, and later became a military advisor to Chiang Kai-shek, then Commander of the National Revolutionary Army. Morochkovsky fought in the Battle of Shanghai starting in August 1937. During the battle, he led a White Russian armored vehicle to explode a Japanese stronghold in Shanghai North Railway Station. He also helped the Chinese troops withdraw from Shanghai. Thus, he was hailed as a war hero. Later, he worked for the intelligence agency loyal to the Nationalist (KMT) Government in Chongqing. He set up a secret radio station at 559 D Route Lafayette (now Middle Fuxing Road) in Shanghai and provided an amount of valuable information to the KMT government. On the morning of October 26, 1941, the Japanese Kempeitai detected the radio station and raided Morochkovsky's apartment in the French Concession. Aware of the detection, Morochkovsky shot himself dead, aged 45.<sup>3</sup> After the victory of China's War of Resistance, as the Soviet policy toward White Russians changed, some of the White Russians in China returned to their homeland while more moved to Europe and North America.

In addition to the Korean independence activists and the White Russians, there were also political exiles and refugees in Shanghai from other parts of the world in the first half of the 20th century including: members of the Vietnamese Independence Movement; members of the Indian Independence Movement; groups and individuals fighting for the independence of the Philippines; members of the Malaya Independence Movement; and members of the Polish government-in-exile. In other open cities such as Harbin, Dalian, Tianjin and Qingdao, there were also a large number of exiles and refugees from countries such as Russia and South Korea. Hong Kong under the British rule not only accepted foreign political exiles and refugees, but also sheltered political exiles from mainland China, playing an important role in China's modern revolution. Hong Kong was the base for the Revive China Society established by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen and other pioneers of China's democratic revolution. Both the first and the second Guangzhou (Canton) Uprisings were plotted in Hong Kong. Hong Kong, as a free port, had also offered Chinese communists a cover to organize revolutionary events. Before the Pearl Harbor attack and the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, the city also accepted thousands of refugees and anti-Japanese democrats from mainland China.

To sum up, political exiles and refugees usually: entered areas between concessions and Chinese zones in open cities; sought for political and economic benefits by serving different powers, political parties or warring sides; generally stood

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<sup>3</sup>Pan (2015, pp. 18, 21).

with the Chinese people during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. Obviously, the arrival of Jewish refugees in China's open cities including Shanghai, Harbin, Dalian, Tianjin, Qingdao, and Hong Kong had very much to do with their common inclusive tradition of accepting political exiles and refugees.

### **16.3 Cities Offering Conditions for the European Way of Life**

The cities where Jews took refuge were culturally inclusive, offering an environment where the Jewish refugees could live in the European way. Shanghai is the best example.

Since it became a treaty port in the middle 19th century, Shanghai has been famous as an inclusive city. People of different colors, faiths and languages from all over the world gathered in Shanghai and interacted with each other, making Shanghai an international multicultural city. According to incomplete statistics, in the 1930s, there were more than 150,000 immigrants from nearly 40 countries, including the United Kingdom, France, the United States, Japan, Germany, Russia, Italy, Portugal, North Korea, Vietnam, Poland, the Czech Republic and India. The great number of international immigrants had helped Shanghai establish close ties with the rest of the world, facilitated the spread, exchange and integration of diverse cultures in Shanghai, making Shanghai a regional cultural center in the 1920s and 1930s. The Shanghai culture, a special local sub-culture of China, has formed and developed in such a multicultural environment through the blend and integration of different cultures from China and abroad. To a great extent, the local Shanghai culture is very international.

According to scholars, there were several communities with distinct regional backgrounds that had considerable cultural influence in Shanghai, such as the Ningbo-Shaoxing community, the Suzhou-Wuxi community, the Canton community, the French and Russian communities in the French Concession, the Anglo-American community in the International Settlement, and the Japan and Korea communities in Hongkou. These communities, or cultural circles, had formed through the blend and integration of sub-cultures, and they interacted with each other in Shanghai. The blend and integration of Chinese culture with French and Russian cultures in the French Concession was a typical case. At first, only French dishes were served in French restaurants. Later, Russian Borscht and black bread were served which were popular among the Russian residents in the French Concession. Then, Chinese dishes were also served as the number of Chinese customers grew. Therefore, the French restaurants in Shanghai had their special Shanghai features which distinguished them from French restaurants elsewhere. For another example, in the neighborhood near Zhoushan (Chusan) Road and Tangshan (Tongshan) Road in Hongkou district where many Jewish refugees lived, the German-Austrian culture, Jewish culture, and Chinese culture blended with each other. Many Hongkou resi-

dents learnt to speak German and eat “Bagel” (a type of Jewish bread). The Jewish refugees also felt comfortable with almost all Chinese foods.<sup>4</sup> Besides, in the foreign concessions dominated by the United Kingdom and France, the authorities did not interfere in cultural activities, making the concessions a free and inclusive cultural enclave. Different cultures, races, religious beliefs and political ideologies, especially religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, could coexist in peace there. Such openness and inclusiveness allowed people of different faiths, colors and languages to continue their own way of living. All of the factors mentioned above created in Shanghai an ideal environment for the survival and development of immigrants and provided Jewish refugees with a familiar European feeling.

Open cities such as Harbin, Tianjin, Dalian and Qingdao also had multicultural European atmosphere. Harbin had diversified religious beliefs. In addition to the local Buddhism, Taoism and Shamanism, the Russian Orthodox Eastern Church and other Christian denominations, Islam, and Judaism also thrived in Harbin. In the field of architecture, Baroque and neoclassical buildings could be easily found in Harbin. With the increase of foreign population, Western languages, music, dance, food and clothing were also introduced into Harbin. As one of the earliest Chinese cities open to the West, Tianjin’s cityscape had borrowed elements from its foreign concessions. Public utilities, such as water and electricity supply, roads, postal services and hospitals, were developed in the Western way, and Western architectural complexes emerged, like the “Five Avenues”. Western languages, arts, diets and clothing gradually penetrated into the local life of Tianjin. The interaction of diverse civilizations has promoted the transition of Tianjin towards a modern international metropolis. In Dalian, Russian and Japanese cultures penetrated into all aspects of life in the city. Modernization first came in the fields of public infrastructure, news agencies, education, hospitals and literature, and Dalian began to show diversified development. In Qingdao, the German culture interacted with the Chinese Confucian tradition, and modern Western institutions, cultures, and science and technology were introduced into the city, allowing Qingdao to gradually develop into a multicultural international city. The British introduced Western culture into Hong Kong, including religious faith, culture and arts, ways of life and fashion, making it a bridge connecting Chinese and Western cultures. Young people in Hong Kong received British education which was very different from traditional Confucian education. They grew into a “Chinese-English bilingual elite class” with a high level of exposure to both Chinese and British cultures. In the late 19th century, a network of foreign-language newspapers and periodicals was formed and based in Hong Kong, Macau and Shanghai and influenced Guangzhou, Shantou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, Tianjin, Beijing and Hankou, which not only promoted the development of Chinese journalism, but also helped spread new ideas, inspire people, transform the concepts of intellectuals and promote social revolution.

In short, the cultural diversity of Shanghai and other open cities, especially the inclusion of European lifestyle in these cities, created a great attraction for European Jewish refugees.

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<sup>4</sup>Pan Guang ed., *Shanghai Jews Memoirs*, p. 148.

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# Chapter 17

## Characteristic II of the “Chinese Pattern”: Jews Living in an Atmosphere Free from Anti-semitism



Unlike predominantly Christian Europe, North America and Latin America, anti-Semitism has never grown within China, a country of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Therefore, Jewish refugees in China had never suffered from native anti-Semitism. This chapter focuses on how the Chinese regarded Jews and why there was no native anti-Semitism in China.

### 17.1 The Chinese Attitude Towards Jews

After the middle nineteenth century, the Chinese concept of Jews gradually evolved under internal changes and external pressure.

Not to mention ancient times, in the middle nineteenth century, the concept was still very vague. According to Michael Pollack, from ancient times to the nineteenth century, there were more than 20 Chinese expressions to describe Jews and Judaism, including lan mao hui hui (Muslims with blue hats) and T'iao chin chiao.<sup>1</sup> Due to the confusion of names, the general public in China could not figure out exactly what the Jews and Judaism were.

According to Professor Fei Chengkang, the term “Jews” was first introduced to China by a German missionary Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff (8 July 1803–9 August 1851). The term Jewish State was first known through Eastern Western Monthly Magazine,<sup>2</sup> which Gützlaff edited and published from 1833 to 1838 [Footnote Ref: 26]. In 1836, Jews was first translated as “you tai” (犹太) in the Chinese book Nativity of Christ and the translation was then used in the 1840 Chinese version of the Bible. The translation was again used in A Short Account of the Maritime Circuit by Xv Jiyu and books officially published by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Therefore, “you tai” became the standard translation of Jews in China.

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<sup>1</sup>Pollak (1988).

<sup>2</sup>Fei (1994).

The Chinese character for Jou (犹), with the radical “犭”, has some derogatory implication. According to the Kangxi Dictionary of Chinese, the first meaning of that character is a beast that is a member of the monkey family. Its second meaning is puppies. Therefore, some scholars believe that Gützlaff translated Jews as you tai because there was a strong anti-Semitic tradition in his homeland Germany. Also, Gützlaff understood that Chinese feudal rulers liked to use characters with the radical “犭” to name minorities in the country and overseas nations because they felt superior to any of them.<sup>3</sup> This is partly true, but it should be noted that Chinese rulers accepted this translation mainly because of their arrogance instead of anti-Semitism. After all, they once accepted the translation “猶去” and “猶英” for France and the United Kingdom. Moreover, as it is mentioned above, there was no religious and ideological basis for anti-Semitism in China. Scholars and the general public knew little about this ethnic group. They used the translation because it was mainstream and conventional. At that time, many people called Kaifeng Jews “lan mao hui hui”, which shows that the Chinese could not even distinguish between Jews and Muslims.

However, the lack of information on Jews drove some Chinese scholars to study this new ethnic group with strong interest. They explored and studied issues related to Jews, Judaism and Jews in China from different perspectives and produced numerous results. Jiang Guanyun was the first to study Jews from the perspective of ethnology and ethnography. He concluded that Jews were Caucasian Semites, who had oval faces, large eyes, thin lips and sharp noses.<sup>4</sup> Hong Jun was the first Chinese scholar to study on Jews in China and included his result in his *Names of Denominations* in Yuan Dynasty published in 1897.<sup>5</sup> Thereafter, Zhang Xiangwen, Ye Han, Chen Yuan, Zhang Xinglang and other scholars published their findings about Kaifeng Jews. A number of scholars, including Yu Songhua, Yu Gan, Ge Suicheng and Pan Guangdan, continued to study Jews from perspectives of ethnology (ethnography), history, international relations and religions. They also translated some works from the West into Chinese. Jewish studies in China is already covered in the Theory section above. Thanks to the pioneering studies of these scholars, the Chinese people in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China gradually had a more comprehensive and realistic picture of this mysterious nation.

After China's modern democratic movements surged, especially the 1911 Xinhai Revolution and the 1919 May Fourth Movement, a number of Chinese statesmen, journalists and diplomats, who were also scholars, had shown a strong interest in the Jewish people and civilization. They usually politicized their research and tried to draw lessons from how the Jewish people coped with their challenges in an attempt to strengthen and revitalize the Chinese nation.

The political columnist Wang Tao believed that Jewish culture survived as an independent ethnic group and played an important role in the West but they had been assimilated in Kaifeng because Chinese culture was far superior to the Jewish culture and even the Western culture. He further concluded the Chinese people did

<sup>3</sup>Fei (1994).

<sup>4</sup>Guan (1903–1904).

<sup>5</sup>Hong (1897).

not have to be afraid of the Western culture, and opening the door to the West would not undermine the superior Chinese culture.<sup>6</sup>

The Chinese diplomat Xue Fucheng asserted that it was not derogatory to identify Jews as successful merchants. Their entrepreneurial spirit was exactly what the Chinese people needed. After traveling around the United Kingdom, France and some other European countries, Xue Fucheng wrote that the United Kingdom was one of the richest countries in the world, but the richest people in London were Jews who were even wealthier than the British royal family. Any country who wanted to borrow millions of pounds had to negotiate with them. Jews had eventually become loan sponsors for many countries and also had shares in major banks in the world. It was believed that the British were good at doing business, but they admitted they could not compete with Jews. Jews was the most powerful ethnic group in the world.<sup>7</sup> Xue Fucheng's description might not be very precise, but he communicated a very clear message: If China developed commerce and trade and the people became as rich as Jews, China would become the most powerful country in the world. Interestingly, conscious or unconscious, many overseas Chinese later did what Xue Fucheng proposed. Some of them got rich through entrepreneurial endeavors and they were called "Oriental Jews" by the local people.

Liang Qichao, a reformist leader in the late Qing Dynasty, viewed the Jewish people as a contrast to the backward Chinese people. He believed the Jews were the best example of "new citizens" and their spirit was essential for China's progress and development. After a visit to the United States, he concluded Jews were the most powerful and influential immigrant groups in the United States. It was estimated 30–40% of American banks were owned by Jews, 50–60% of American bank employees were Jews, and Jews had full control over the New York government. In the nineteenth century, Jewish had become the most influential ethnic group. The British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli was a Jew, the financial tycoons of New York were Jews, and 48 of the world's celebrities listed on a New York newspaper were Jews. Liang Qichao believed that Jews were strong because they were very united, which was unmatched by any other ethnic group. They had been without "homeland" for thousands of years, but had maintained their ethnic identity and even gained powerful influence. On the contrary, many ancient nations had been destroyed.<sup>8</sup> Liang's message was also very clear: The Chinese people must learn from Jews to achieve development and progress, and if the Chinese people could unite and depend on our own power, China would enjoy a bright future.

Some scholars and politicians also learned negative lessons from the tragedy of Jews and warned the Chinese people not to repeat their mistakes. After the Eight-Power Allied Forces invaded Beijing in 1900, the Chinese people faced a fatal crisis. Meanwhile, Jews were massacred in Russia and Eastern Europe. An article entitled Jews without Homeland commented: Without a country, they (the Jews) were not safe

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<sup>6</sup>Wang (1959).

<sup>7</sup>Xu (1985).

<sup>8</sup>Liang (1903, 1981).

even though they had an enormous wealth.<sup>9</sup> The article also asserted: If you cannot defend your country, you cannot save your own root.<sup>10</sup> The Chinese revolutionist Chen Tianhua wrote in a poem in 1903: I'm afraid I would lose my country, just like the Jews.<sup>11</sup> When Kang Youwei, another leading reformist, visited Jerusalem in 1909, he witnessed the misery of Jews crying before the Western Wall. He wrote a long poem, saying: The Chinese people must avoid the Jewish tragedy and fight for salvation.<sup>12</sup> In short, these scholars and statemen shared the belief that the Chinese people could not just care about their own individual affairs, or otherwise they would become stateless like Jews.

To a certain extent, these comments on Jews catered to China's realities of the time, so they were more impactful than the purely academic research mentioned above, even more so for the general public. Therefore, the general Chinese concept of Jews in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China consisted largely of the following ideas and impressions: (1) Jews scattered around the world without homeland; (2) they were discriminated, persecuted and slaughtered; (3) they were smart, entrepreneurial and had made great riches; (4) they were very united with strong community awareness; (5) they had created a brilliant culture with great wisdom; and (6) they controlled the global financial industry, having a very important impact on Western countries. Although these ideas and impressions were relatively fragmented and one-sided, they still generated a basic image of Jews and their civilization.

## 17.2 The Chinese Attitude Towards Anti-semitism

Before the late nineteenth century, there was no incidence of anti-Semitism in China and the Chinese people had little knowledge of anti-Semitism elsewhere in the world. Although the Jewish diaspora was mentioned in some writings by Chinese scholars about the Jewish civilization and the Jewish community in Kaifeng, the concept of anti-Semitism was basically unknown in China. Actually, many Sephardi Jews were living and operating their business in Hong Kong or Shanghai, but these rich Sephardi Jews who called themselves British gentlemen certainly would not tell the Chinese what Jews had suffered.

By the late nineteenth century, anti-Jewish massacre broke out in Russia and Eastern Europe, and a lot of Russian Jews fled to China, which gave the Chinese people the first idea of anti-Semitism that existed outside China. At first, only some Chinese diplomats and their families deployed in those areas witnessed and took note

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<sup>9</sup>The Left Jews (1904).

<sup>10</sup>The Left Jews (1904).

<sup>11</sup>Liu (1958).

<sup>12</sup>Kang (1996).

of the anti-Semitic violence. Cui Guoyin, who was an envoy of the Qing Dynasty to Europe from 1889 to 1893, described the anti-Semitic phenomenon in Russia in detail. He wrote on the 2nd day of the 12th lunar month, 1890, “Russians are talking about expelling Jews. Some Jews have already left while many others remain here in hunger and were seriously injured.”<sup>13</sup> In 1903, Shan Shili, who went to Europe together with her husband, wrote about the tragic situation of the Roman Jews in her article *The Jewish Quarter in Rome—The Ghetto*.<sup>14</sup> Around that time, many Chinese newspapers and magazines like *Sein Min Choong Bou*, *Zhejiang chao*, *Jiangsu* and the *Alarm Bell Daily* carried reports of anti-Semitism in Russia and Eastern Europe. They generally condemned the anti-Semitic atrocities and expressed deep sympathy to the Jews.<sup>15</sup> Anti-Semitism was also mentioned in some published articles about the Jewish diaspora, the Zionist movement, conflicts between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, the migration of Russian Jews by Chinese scholars such as Yu Songhua, Yu Gan and Ge Suicheng. At that time, however, China had no deep understanding of the origin and substance of anti-Semitism.

Meanwhile, the “imposed” or “imported” anti-Semitism slowly infiltrated into China. This is partly because more and more Europeans and Americans came to settle in China and they brought anti-Semitism from the Christian West to China. Another reason was that more and more Western writings were translated into Chinese which contained anti-Semitic ideology or bias against Jews. For example, the anti-Semitic events organized by the Japanese, White Russians and Nazis in Harbin and Shanghai can be categorized as “imposed” anti-Semitism because most of the planners and participants were foreigners. A few Chinese were involved, but they were not self-motivated. Compared with “imposed” anti-Semitism, “imported” anti-Semitism had come earlier and generated greater impacts which were often consequences of the unconscious acts of the Chinese. For instance, Jiang Guanyun translated *Babel and Bible*, a book by the German assyriologist Friedrich Delitzsch, into Chinese for the academic research purpose but the book had an obvious anti-Semitic position.<sup>16</sup> In 1904, Charles Lamb’s *Tales From Shakespeare* was translated into Chinese, and then many Chinese readers regarded Shylock as a typical character representing Jews. In 1911, an anti-Semitic article entitled *The Empire of Jews* was published on *The Orient Magazine*, but the article was in fact an “import”, a translation from Japanese.<sup>17</sup> In the 1920s, when Dai Jitao and his followers promoted Nationalism proposed by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen as one of the Three Principles, he borrowed ideas from Edouard Drumont and Charles Maurras, both French nationalists who became leaders of a French anti-Semitic organization set up after the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Cui (1988).

<sup>14</sup>Shan (1985).

<sup>15</sup>Lin (2001).

<sup>16</sup>The translation was first published in *Sein Min Choong Bou* from 1901 to 1903.

<sup>17</sup>Qian (1911).

<sup>18</sup>Dreyfus, a French Jewish officer, was imprisoned and later rehabilitated. It was an anti-Semitic incident.

Overall, “imported” anti-Semitism had some influence on China as they had created some negative views or prejudice against the Jews, but the influence was rather limited. It had not produced any systematic anti-Semitic theory or ideology, or stirred up anti-Semitic actions in China. The Chinese were much less negative about Jews than about the English, Russian or Japanese. As far as the overall image of Jews in China is concerned, the positive side greatly outweighed negative one. It should be pointed out that “imported” anti-Semitism was sometimes so mean and vicious that it generated doubts and “imposed” anti-Semitic actions had also met with resistance in China. In short, in the late 1920s and the early 1930s, the Chinese people’s perception of anti-Semitism evolved from little understanding to basic understanding and then to deep understanding, from belief to doubts and then to disbelief, and from indifference to disgust and then to protest.

After Hitler seized power in 1933, he launched massive anti-Semitic movements which shocked the Chinese who were suffering from Japanese invasions and raised their awareness of anti-Semitism. The Chinese firmly opposed the Nazi’s atrocities that they couldn’t understand or care about before. On May 13, 1933, Madam Soong Ching-ling led a delegation to the German Consulate in Shanghai to denounce Nazi Germany’s anti-Semitic persecution. The delegation members were all key figures of the Chinese Alliance for Civil Rights Protection, including Cai Yuanpei, Yang Xingfo, Lu Xun and Lin Yutang.<sup>19</sup> They argued that the persecution of Jews and anti-Semitic atrocities systematically organized and instigated by the Nazi German government was a sign of regression to the darkest days of the Middle Ages and the Russian Empire.<sup>20</sup> After the 1930s, as Japanese aggression escalated and Japanese and German fascists gradually became complicit, condemnation and protests against the anti-Semitic atrocities grew in China. In particular, after the Kristallnacht, condemnation and protests against anti-Semitic atrocities surged among the general public in China. In 1939, a book entitled *The Jews and Palestine* by Bai Shi was published by Culture and Life Press, strongly denouncing the savagery of Nazism.<sup>21</sup> In the preface to his translation of *Stranger Than Fiction: A Short History of the Jews from Earliest Times to the Present Day* by Lewis Browne, Ni Xiuzhang praised the Jews’ unwavering will, spirit and faith and was outraged over Hitler’s anti-Semitic atrocity.<sup>22</sup> All this had undoubtedly encouraged the Chinese who were fighting against Japanese fascism at the same time. It should be noted that in the first three decades of the twentieth century, cities like Shanghai, Harbin and Tianjin accepted a large number of Russian and European Jewish refugees fleeing anti-Jewish persecution, which is an evidence that the Chinese had taken practical actions to resist anti-Semitism and help Jews.

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<sup>19</sup>Pan (2005).

<sup>20</sup>Soong (1952).

<sup>21</sup>Bai (1939).

<sup>22</sup>Browne (1939).

### 17.3 The Chinese Attitude Towards Zionism

It is well-known that Zionism is the result of anti-Semitism. Therefore, the Chinese were not likely to understand Zionism when they knew little about anti-Semitism. They were not at all concerned when the first World Zionist Congress was convened and the World Zionist Organization was founded in 1897. However, only a few years later, the Jewish community in Shanghai began to organize Zionist activities and news of the Russian anti-Semitism reached China. At this point, the Chinese became aware of Zionism. On October 1, 1901, the 19<sup>th</sup> volume of the Collection of Various Journals was published, including an article entitled Zionism Movements quoted from Universal Circulating Herald which reported the foundation of the World Zionist Organization and complimented the founder Theodor Herzl with a Chinese proverb “where there is a will there is a way”.<sup>23</sup> The article argued that, for Jews, a sovereign state counted more than money. Although this argument was raised also in order to stimulate the Chinese to fight for the survival of China, it communicated the mission of Zionism: rebuilding a Jewish state to address the plight of displaced Jews. The article was first published on the Eastern Miscellany in 1904 and had probably been written in response to the foundation of the Shanghai Zionist Association (SZA) in 1903. In 1904, SZA began to publish its own publication Israel's Messenger to publicize Zionism. In short, in large cities like Shanghai, Zionism not only spread among the Jews but also influenced the Chinese, which had driven Chinese writers to publish articles on this topic. In the next decade, more and more Jews in China joined the Zionist movement, while a number of Zionist organizations and newspapers emerged and were very active in China's large cities. The influence of Zionism increased among the Chinese. For some Chinese nationalists, it sounded reasonable for the Jews to build their own state, because they shared the same ancestry, culture and identity.<sup>24</sup> The Nationalist Government of Republic of China expressed its support for the Balfour Declaration shortly after its announcement in 1917, which equaled to declaring support for the Jews in Palestine to establish their own state.<sup>25</sup> China reiterated this position on many subsequent occasions. On July 16, 1928, Wang Zhengting, then foreign minister of the Nationalist Government, stated that his government fully understood the Jewish people's desire to establish their own state and believed that Zionist movements would succeed.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to the government, the nationalism and democracy movements and the New Culture Movement in China had shared quite a few aspirations with the Zionist movement: strong nationalism, utopian socialism, freedom and democracy, revival of national culture, and anti-fascism during wartime. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, leader of China's democratic revolution, as well as his comrades, regarded the Zionist movement as a nationalist movement to revive the Jewish state, and they were inspired the ethos of

<sup>23</sup> Collection of Various Journals, Copy Vol. 19, Zhonghua Book Company, pp. 1099–1100.

<sup>24</sup> Yin (1919). See also Yu (1927).

<sup>25</sup> Central Zionist Archives, Z4/2039, Jerusalem.

<sup>26</sup> Israel's Messenger, 3 August 1928.

Jews.<sup>27</sup> In a letter to Ezra on April 24, 1920, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen praised and expressed his support for the Zionist movement. Later, in many speeches, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen spoke highly of the contribution of Jews to human civilization, and supported their nationalist or Zionist movement.<sup>28</sup> Hu Shih, a key pioneer and leader of the Chinese New Culture Movement, also highly appreciated Jews for their scholarship and their resilience, calling the Jewish nation a “wise nation”.<sup>29</sup> Yu Songhua, a famous Chinese scholar, argued that Jews should be taken as a model for the Chinese national revival, and that China must try to get strong in all aspects so that Chinese figures could shine as brightly in the world as their Jewish counterparts. He said with confidence: “I am convinced that, if we devote the same zeal and perseverance to exploiting our own treasures and promoting our own culture as Jews did to their revival movement, our achievements will far exceed Zionism”.<sup>30</sup> Madam Soong Ching-Ling had also supported the Jewish liberation movement and their anti-fascist struggle, and had maintained close connections with Jews in China, including the Zionist leaders. She had a number of international friends who were sympathetic to and supported the Chinese revolution. Many of them were Jews, such as Israel Epstein and Ruth Weiss.

Overall, from the issuance of the Balfour Declaration during World War I to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Chinam, including the government and the people, had been sympathetic to the Zionist movement. This period can be divided into three phases. The first phase was from the end of World War I to Hitler’s rise to power in 1933. During this phase, China published translations and articles about Zionism which created a general sympathy for Jews and their Zionist movement. The second phase lasted from the rise of Nazi Germany in 1933 to the end of World War II in 1945. At this stage, outraged by the Nazi’s persecution of Jews, the general public in China were more sympathetic to Jews and Zionism. Many published articles explicitly supported the rebuilding of a Jewish state. As said before, some Chinese government leaders tried to create a “Jewish settlement” in China’s territory to accommodate Jewish refugees who fled the Nazis, but the attempt didn’t come off anyway. The third phase lasted from the end of World War II in 1945 to the establishment of the State of Israeli in 1948. At this stage, although the general public in China had taken note of the Palestinian Arabs’ sufferings inflicted by the Zionist movement, they were still overwhelmed by the Holocaust and still believed that it was just for Jews to have their own state. In 1947, when voting on the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine, China hesitated and finally abstained, as China maintained good relations with the Arab states. The State of Israel was established in May 1948, and was generally welcomed by China’s press, including the newspapers of Communist Party of China.

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<sup>27</sup> Yin (1919). See also Sun (1927).

<sup>28</sup> Wang (2008).

<sup>29</sup> Tang (1993).

<sup>30</sup> Yu (1927, p. 28).

## 17.4 Why Was China Free from Anti-semitism

It is well acknowledged that China has no anti-Semitic tradition; anti-Semitism in China was either “imported” or “imposed” by Western powers or invaders. There was even a strong resistance against anti-Semitism. You may ask why? There were several reasons.

First, anti-Semitism was derived from deep-rooted religious prejudices and it was evident in Christian Europe, while China was mainly influenced by Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. In other words, there was no religious prejudice against Jews in China.

Second, as mentioned earlier, throughout its history, China has advocated “integrating Chinese and minor cultures” under the premise that minorities would not intervene with China’s political affairs. China was also willing to “learn” from other religions and peoples to borrow their strengths. Therefore, although ethnic disputes and conflicts did occur in China from time to time, integration of ethnic groups was mainstream. Jews had shown outstanding business and cultural talents since they came to China. They were also good at building and maintaining connections with government officials at all levels. Thus, they were “model subjects” in the eyes of Chinese monarchs. Unlike Europe, China had never witnessed any top-down anti-Semitism.

Third, the Chinese and Jews, both key makers of the world civilization, shared many similarities. Just take the beliefs of Jews in ancient China. As mentioned above, the Kaifeng Jews inscribed on a stone in 1489, “Our religion is just slightly different from Confucianism. We both worship nature, respect our ancestors and parents, emphasize loyalty, fidelity in a marriage, and value family and friends.”<sup>31</sup> This accounted for the freedom of China from anti-Semitism to a great extent.

Fourth, the Chinese and Jews were both oppressed by foreign nations and fascism in the modern age. After the Opium Wars, China had been invaded and oppressed by Imperialist powers such as the United Kingdom, France, Russia, the United States and Germany. During World War II, 35 million Chinese were killed and wounded by Japanese aggressors. It should be pointed out, in particular, that over the past centuries, anti-Chinese campaigns have occurred from time to time which were very similar to anti-Semitic movements. For instance, the anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia was exactly the same as the anti-Jewish atrocities by Tsarist Russia and the Nazis. The common sufferings underlined the Chinese people’s opposition to anti-Semitism.

In short, China was an ideal haven for the European Jewish refugees, because China was free from anti-Semitic prejudices. Their living environment was totally different from Europe, North America, and Latin America. That’s why they could build and develop friendship with their local Chinese neighbors.

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<sup>31</sup>Chen and Ye (1923).

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# Chapter 18

## Characteristic III of the “Chinese Pattern”: Existence of a Rich and Strong Jewish Community



Before the arrival of European Jewish refugees, China had two influential Jewish communities, the Sephardi Jews and the Russian Ashkenazi Jews. This chapter is about the development of the Jewish communities and their support for European Jews fleeing to take refuge in China.

### 18.1 The Rise of Sephardi Jewish Merchants

After the Opium Wars, the Sephardi Jews came to China for business as the United Kingdom began to control trade in China. Therefore, Hong Kong and Shanghai, both open ports and trade centers, became their business bases.

#### 18.1.1 *The Eastward Migration of Sephardi Jews and the Rise of the Sassoons*

Sephardi Jews originally referred to Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal and later referred to Jews from the Mediterranean region, especially West Asia and North Africa. After 1840, the majority of the Sephardi Jews in China came from Baghdad under the control of the Ottoman Empire and India under the British rule. Among them, the best-known families were the Sassoons, the Kadoories, the Hardoons, the Abrahams, the Solomons, the Ezras, the Toegs, the Hayims, and the Sophers.

The history of Jews in Baghdad dates back 4000 years when the Hebrews, a branch of ancient Semites and the ancestors of Jews, lived in Mesopotamia. According to the Old Testament, all the Hebrews migrated from Mesopotamia to Canaan (now Palestine) following their chief Abraham in 1900 B.C. In 1025 B.C., Saul from the tribe of Benjamin established the first state of the Hebrews and was succeeded by David and Solomon. In the era of Solomon, the Kingdom was most powerful. After

Solomon's death, the Kingdom declined as conflicts and splits rose. In 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Neo-Babylon, laid siege to Jerusalem, finally destroying the city and the First Temple. Thousands of people from the Kingdom of Judah, including the king, the nobility, priests and artisans, were taken captive to Babylonia (now Baghdad). This period is known as the “Babylonian captivity”. After the Neo-Babylonian empire was defeated by the Persian Empire in 538 B.C., the King of Persia, Cyrus the Great, allowed the exiled Jews to return to their homeland and supported them to restore the Temple in Jerusalem which helped revive Judaism. But not all Jews returned, as many of them stayed in Babylonia. In the eighteenth century, after the changes of empires and wars, there were about five to six thousand Jews in Baghdad. Although most of them were very poor, some Jewish merchants still made huge fortunes through trading or issuing loans at excessive interest rates. They were the richest in Bagdad. Therefore, governors of Bagdad used to appoint a Jew as their chief financial officer, most often one of the Sassoons, the most powerful family in local Jewish community.

In the nineteenth century, the Sephardi Jews in Bagdad began to migrate eastward to India, Malaya, Singapore, China and Japan, as the Ottoman authorities in Bagdad showed a clear anti-Semitic tendency, while the living environment in the East was better with more freedom and business opportunities. Thus, the Sassoons moved to India and then to China. Many more Sephardi Jews migrated eastward to China, like the Sassoons, and achieved success.

The story went back to 1821 when the Ottoman authorities appointed Dawud Pasha as Governor of Bagdad. After Dawud Pasha took office, anti-Semitism intensified in Bagdad. A number of Jewish celebrities were arrested and killed, including Ezra, a Jewish patriarch. As the situation became intolerable, David Sassoon, head of the Sassoon family, wrote a letter to the Ottoman government and demanded that Dawud Pasha must be removed. Hearing the news, Dawud Pasha tried to retaliate and developed a plan to slaughter Jews, especially David Sassoon. As a result, the Sassoons had to escape from Bagdad. At that point, anti-Semitism weakened in the United Kingdom as a group of wise and informed gentlemen called for eliminating discrimination against Jews. Among them was Sir Robert Grant, then Governor of Mumbai. In August 1833 and April 1834, the British Parliament enacted ordinances to end East India Company's monopoly of trade in China. India became a hub for trade between the United Kingdom and the Far East and Mumbai was a springboard for British merchants to expand into China. Having recognized the opportunities under these circumstances, David Sassoon decided to settle in Mumbai and to leverage the British power to recover his wealth and influence. In 1832, David Sassoon was given the British citizenship, and then set up David Sassoon and Sons Company in Mumbai. Then, he began to transport cotton textiles from Lancashire and opium from India to China. These products had a large market in China and David Sassoon's business empire steadily grew. As Cecil Roth, a well-known British Jewish historian and author of The Sassoon Dynasty, said, “David Sassoon discovered a mine of gold, which was a reward for his business instincts.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Roth (1941).

### ***18.1.2 Formation of Sephardi Jewish Communities in Hong Kong and Shanghai***

In 1840, the British Empire launched the First Opium War, forcing the Qing government to cede Hong Kong and open five trade ports including Shanghai under a series of unequal treaties. China was forced open by guns, which ended the isolationist policies starting from the Ming Dynasty. This created a favorable environment and huge business opportunities in China for Sephardi Jews. At the time, the Sassoons were doing very well in China. David Sassoon sent his second son Elias Sassoon to Guangzhou to take charge of the family's business in China. In 1841, David Sassoon and Sons Company opened its first office in Hong Kong and it later developed into a branch. In the following years, building on its extensive business contacts within the British Empire, the Sassoons grew their business in Hong Kong rapidly, while other Sephardi merchants followed. These firms, banks and offices employed a growing number of Jews and many senior and middle-level employees were Jews from Baghdad and Mumbai. In this way, the first Jewish community formed in Hong Kong. In 1858 (or 1855), the first Jewish cemetery was established in Happy Valley in Hong Kong,<sup>2</sup> which is a proof of a considerable Jewish population in Hong Kong. There must be hundreds of Jews there, or otherwise there was no need for a cemetery. It is also a confirmation that a Jewish community had formed in Hong Kong.

After Shanghai became a treaty port in 1843, the tremendous opportunities and superior business environment quickly attracted the keen Jewish merchants. Shanghai became a hub for domestic and foreign trade, most of all thanks to its geographical advantages, as it is located on the west coast of the Pacific, in the middle of China's coastline and at the estuary of the Yangtze River. In 1832, Hugh Hamilton Lindsay, an East India Company official, took a secret view of Shanghai aboard the Lord Amherst. He said the benefits of trade with this place (referring to Shanghai) would be too large to estimate.<sup>3</sup> As a treaty port open to the outside world, Shanghai offered attractive tax incentives to foreign merchants. The 1842 Treaty of Nanjing provided that trade in the treaty ports should be subject to negotiation between the British and the Qing governments. Later, the supplementary treaty formally stipulated the import and export tariffs on all goods, excluding silk, tea, and opium, should be 5%. The 1858 Treaty of Tianjin allowed foreign vessels to navigate freely between all trade ports in China, free from double taxation. These tax incentives encouraged foreign trade with China. More importantly, the establishment of foreign concessions in Shanghai and their relative independence made Shanghai an especially attractive place for foreign traders.

In 1845, David Sassoon and Sons Company established a branch in Shanghai. Since then, their business in Shanghai had grown at an alarming rate. Shanghai quickly surpassed Hong Kong and Guangzhou as the center of the Sassoons' business in China. After the death of David Sassoon in 1864, his eldest son Albert Sassoon

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<sup>2</sup>Leventhal (1988).

<sup>3</sup>Wei (1979).

took over the ownership and management rights according to the Jewish customs. His second son Elias Sassoon set up his own company in 1872 called Messrs. E. D. Sassoon and Company, Bankers and Merchants, generally known as the new Sassoons business. The old Sassoons business in China, especially in Shanghai, gave way gradually to the new Sassoons business. Elias's eldest son, Sir Jacob Sassoon, managed to promote trade between Mumbai and Shanghai, as well as between Shanghai and other cities in China, while expanding into new markets like Japan, Thailand, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. As the Sassoons business in Shanghai continued to grow, a Jewish community gradually formed in Shanghai, consisting mainly of the employees of the Sassoons business. The vast majority were Sephardi Jews. After Sir Jacob Sassoon died in 1916, his nephew Sir Ellice Victor Sassoon took over the position as the general manager. While continuing to develop import and export, he invested heavily in real estate and industry. Because of the Indian independence movement, Victor Sassoon completely shifted the business focus to Shanghai. After three generations of painstaking efforts, the Sassoons became the richest family in Shanghai in the 1930s and were later dubbed as the “Rothschilds of the East”.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, the Jewish population in Hong Kong experienced no significant growth in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Shanghai Jewish community formed later than Hong Kong but it soon surpassed Hong Kong in size and several other ways. When the Jews in Shanghai built a synagogue, Hong Kong had only one small venue for Jewish religious activities (built in 1870). A synagogue is often a center for Jewish religious, cultural, educational and political activities and the symbol of a mature Jewish community. The difference was mainly because the Sephardi merchants focused on expanding their business in the Chinese mainland while Hong Kong was more like a forward base and later a logistics base for them.

By the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the situation began to change. As it continued to increase its economic and trade strength, its position in the East Asia and even in the world grew up, and its political position under the British rule was relatively stable, Hong Kong began to play a role unmatched by Shanghai and Tianjin as any other city in the Chinese mainland. Therefore, the Sephardi merchants turned their eyes to Hong Kong again, while some Ashkenazi Jews<sup>5</sup> also came to Hong Kong. The Jewish community in Hong Kong thrived and expanded.<sup>6</sup>

The Ohel Leah Synagogue was erected in Hong Kong in 1901–1902, with donation from the Sassoons. In 1909 (or 1905), the Jewish Recreation Club of Hong Kong was built with donation from the Kadoories.<sup>7</sup> In short, after more than 50 years, the

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<sup>4</sup>The Rothschild Family was the richest Jewish family in Europe and had impacted the finance and economy of Europe and the United States for more than 200 years. The founders of the family were Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1744–1812) and his five sons.

<sup>5</sup>Ashkenazi Jews originally referred to European Jews, mainly referring to Central and Eastern European Jews and Russian Jews.

<sup>6</sup>Leventhal (1988).

<sup>7</sup>Leventhal (1988).

Jewish community in Hong Kong became a mature and active community with a much improved internal structure.

From 1904 to 1907, Sir Matthew Nathan (1862–1939) became the Governor of Hong Kong. He was the only Jewish governor of Hong Kong in history (it is said another governor was also Jewish, but the governor himself did not admit it). During his tenure, the Jewish community in Hong Kong made considerable progress. He personally served as honorary chairman of the Ohel Leah Synagogue, participated in activities of the Jewish community, and approved the expansion of the Jewish cemetery.<sup>8</sup> Nathan Road in Kowloon today was named after him.

## 18.2 Russian Jews Making a Good Life in China

Unlike the Sephardi Jews, the Russian Jews had not come to China for trading purposes but to flee the anti-Semitic waves in Russia and Eastern Europe rising since the 1880s.<sup>9</sup> The waves had driven millions of Russian Jews to North America, and thousands of Russian Jews traveled across Siberia to Northeast China and Inner Mongolia, and then southward to Tianjin, Qingdao and Shanghai. During this period, the construction of CER, the expansion of Russia's influence in China, the Russo-Japanese War, and the two Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 were the major factors behind the Russian Jewish migration to China. Certainly, some Russian Jews had come to China to do business, because business opportunities were scarce in anti-Semitic Russia where they could barely survive.

### 18.2.1 *Russian Jews Coming to China Before 1917 and Formation of Jewish Communities in Harbin and Tianjin*

In the late 19th century, Russia had the largest Jewish population in the world. In 1897, a total of five million Jews lived inside the Pale of Settlement and 320,000 Jews lived outside.<sup>10</sup> The Russian Jews at the time were the Jewish community in the worst situation in the world. They were deprived of their citizenship rights and were severely restricted in terms of residence, economic development and marriage. In 1881, the Russian Jews were brutally persecuted due to the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, and a large number of Jews fled from Russia. The Russian government

<sup>8</sup>Luk (2009), or Leventhal (1988).

<sup>9</sup>In March 1881, Russian Emperor Alexander II was assassinated. Because one of the arrested suspects was Jews, the Russian authorities took the opportunity to set off anti-Semitic waves in Russia, which expanded to Eastern Europe and continued till the early twentieth century. See Chap. 14.

<sup>10</sup>Gilbert (2000).

also tried to reduce the domestic pressure by transporting Jews to remote areas and abroad. For example, about 100,000 Jews were forced to move to Siberia. Some of them served in the Imperial Russian Army and some started businesses there.

Although a handful of Russian Jews had come to China in the early 1880s to escape the anti-Semitic storms, massive immigration of Russian Jews to China occurred after the construction of CER began. In 1896, China and Russia signed the Li-Lobanov Treaty, the Sino-Russian Bank Contract and the Contract and the Articles of Association of the Joint Management of China Eastern Railway, under which Russia had the privilege to build a railway linking Siberia and Vladivostok across China's Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces. The railway would be built and operated by CER, which was founded by Sino-Russian Righteousness Victory Bank. In 1898, Russia forced the Qing government to sign the Convention for the Lease of the Liaotung Peninsula (the “Pavlov Agreement”), under which Russia occupied Lvshun Port. In 1900, Russia even made use of the Siege of the International Legations to occupy the Three Northeastern Provinces (Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang). After that, Russia's power in Northeast China and Inner Mongolia grew dramatically, and more and more Russian officials, military personnel, technicians and management personnel came to Northeast China. In order to encourage more Russians to move to Northeast China, the Tsarist Russian government pictured Manchuria as a “paradise” and promised that any Russians who immigrated to this “paradise” (including Jews and other minorities) would be granted the freedom of religion, unlimited commercial rights and access to schools without quota.<sup>11</sup> Although it was not a “paradise” at all, Northeast China still attracted quite a number of Russian Jews who wanted to get free from the restrictions and persecution in Russia. Some of them worked for CER and Lvshun Port, and some others started trading or manufacturing businesses. They mostly scattered in Harbin, Manchuria, Hailar, Qiqihar, Shenyang, Dalian and other places, but some of them went further to South China in search of opportunities. In the early 20th century, they reached Tianjin, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Due to its strategic location, Harbin was chosen as a key point of CER and the management center of CER by Russia. Therefore, a large number of Russian employees (including many Russian Jews) and Chinese workers gathered in Harbin, expanding Harbin from a small fishing village into a big city within a short time. Harbin received the first batch of Jews from Siberia in the late 19th century. These Jews were mainly engaged in mining, animal husbandry, dairy processing and sales of building materials and foods targeting the CER construction. According to the available records, G. B. Drizin was one of the earliest Russian Jewish settlers in Harbin. He was born in 1846 and came to Harbin in 1894, doing business along the Songhua River, mainly purchasing local grain and livestock and selling Russian and American goods. G. B. Drizin's freight houses were on the Songhua River bank in Harbin, where he shipped grain and livestock to Russia. For convenience, he also lived in Harbin. Actually, he was not only the first Jew to settle in Harbin, but also the first Russian expatriate in Harbin.<sup>12</sup> In 1903, Harbin had 500 Russian Jews and these Jews established

<sup>11</sup> Marvin Tokayer. The Fugu Plan (Chinese version), p. 35.

<sup>12</sup> Steinfield (1910).

the Harbin Jewish Association (later renamed the Harbin Jewish Religious Community).<sup>13</sup> In the same year, they built the first Jewish synagogue on Sharman Street (now Xiaman Street), and then moved it to 6 Paodui Street (now Tongjiang Street). Rabbi Lev Levin became the first full-time rabbi of the Harbin Jewish Community.<sup>14</sup> During the war between Russia and Japan, the synagogue became a religious center for the Jewish soldiers fighting in Manchuria, so it was also called the Soldiers' Synagogue. At this point, the Harbin Jewish Community finally took shape as the third Jewish community in modern China, following the Jewish communities in Hong Kong and Shanghai. It is important to note that the Harbin Jewish Community was the first Ashkenazi (Russian) Jewish community in China, unlike the Sephardi Jewish communities in Hong Kong and Shanghai. Meanwhile, Jews scattering in other parts of Northeast China and Inner Mongolia had not formed stable communities yet at that time.

The Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904. The Russian Empire and the Empire of Japan fought over the occupation of Manchuria. In the next year, the war ended in Russia's failure, which worsened the social crisis in Russia and led to the 1905 Russian Revolution. The ruling class, in order to divert public attention, further incited anti-Semitism in Russia. They fabricated The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,<sup>15</sup> fueling the anti-Semitic fire in Russia. Massacre of Jews occurred in hundreds of cities, killing thousands of them. At the same time, the Tsarist government imposed harsh restrictions on the living quarters of the Jews, and press-ganged Jews to army after the outbreak of World War I, which drove more Russian Jews to China. After the Russo-Japanese War, the Russian forces in Northeast China returned to Russia and Japan began to repatriate Russian prisoners, but many Jewish soldiers and prisoners of war refused to return to Russia. Some of them stayed in Northeast China, and some others went to Shanghai and Tianjin. The number of Russian Jews increased in Northeast China, Inner Mongolia, North China, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

There is no general agreement about the growth of Jewish residents in Harbin before 1917. The highest estimate of Harbin Jewish population was 8000 in 1908<sup>16</sup> and the lowest was 1500 in 1910.<sup>17</sup> Even by the lowest estimate, the number of Jews in Harbin doubled from 1903 to 1910. In 1916, it was estimated that Harbin had around 6000 Jews,<sup>18</sup> most of whom were from Russia and Russian-ruled Eastern and Central Europe. During this period, the number of Jews in the northern Manchoukuo and Inner Mongolia, including Qiqihar, Manchuria and Hailar, increased to varying degrees. Jews in Hailar and Manchuria opened Jewish prayer houses in 1910 and 1912.<sup>19</sup> However, the situation was different in southern Manchoukuo. The population of Jews in Mukden (now Shenyang) and Dalian increased before the

<sup>13</sup> Heilongjiang Province Local Chronicles Compilation Committee (1993).

<sup>14</sup> Shuang (2007).

<sup>15</sup> See Chap. 8, Sect. 8.2.

<sup>16</sup> Irene Eber. China and the Jews, p. 37.

<sup>17</sup> Dicker (1962, p. 22).

<sup>18</sup> Goldstein (1999).

<sup>19</sup> Jianchang (1997).

Russo-Japanese War, but it shrank after the war because Japan controlled this region. In North China, there were also some Jews, mainly diplomats and professors in Beijing. Qingdao also had Jewish settlers, including German Jews and Russian Jews who had come via Northeast China. Although these cities all had Jewish settlers, only Tianjin established a real Jewish community.

After the Second Opium War, the Qing government was forced to open Tianjin as a treaty port in 1860. It is said that the first Jew in Tianjin was a Sephardi Jew named Abraham, who died in Tianjin in 1866.<sup>20</sup> In 1901, the Russian concession was established in Tianjin, and since then the number of Russian Jews in Tianjin grew rapidly. In 1904, Jews built their own cemetery in Tianjin. In 1906, Rabbi Scherschevich established the Jewish Religious Community in Tianjin and rented a house as a temporary synagogue.<sup>21</sup> In the same year (or perhaps 1911), the Jews registered the Hebrew Association of Tientsin (THA) and the relief organization, both responsible for raising funds to help the poor Jews.<sup>22</sup> At that time, there were hundreds of Jews in Tianjin but no accurate number is available. The Jewish Religious Community, the synagogue and the Jewish relief organization marked the formation of the Tianjin Jewish Community, the fourth Jewish community in China and the second Ashkenazi (Russian) Jewish community in China after Harbin. At same time, more and more Russian Jews settled in Hong Kong and Shanghai, undermining the predominance of Sephardi Jews in Hong Kong and Shanghai.

### ***18.2.2 Russian Jewish Communities and Settlements in North China After 1917***

The October Revolution and the worsening civil war in Russia drove a large number of Russian and Polish refugees, many of whom were Jews, across Siberia to Harbin, Shenyang, Dalian and small towns along the CER. As a result, the number of Jews in Harbin increased rapidly. In 1920, the population of Jewish residents in Harbin reached 12,000–13,000, while thousands of Jews migrated to North America and Western Europe via Harbin.<sup>23</sup> Some Russian Jews continued to travel south and settled in Tianjin and Shanghai. Many other White Russians and Russian Jews reached Tianjin and Shanghai by sea.

The Harbin Jewish Community further expanded after 1917. After the February Revolution in Russia, the Russian Provisional Government abolished all restrictions based on ethnic and religious discrimination, and Jewish organizations in Harbin were thus reorganized. On April 30, 1917, the Harbin Jewish community elected a

<sup>20</sup>M. W. Beckman. The Jewish Community in Tianjin.

<sup>21</sup>One of the reports of the Jewish Religious Society to Tianjin Social Affairs Bureau. It is now housed in Tianjin Municipal Archives.

<sup>22</sup>Guang (2008).

<sup>23</sup>Der Ferne Osten, 7 December 1926.

provisional committee to take charge of its reorganization.<sup>24</sup> The provisional committee included Zionists, Orthodox and Bundist representatives.<sup>25</sup> In 1919, the Harbin Jewish Communal Association was established and elected the Community Council as its leading organ, indicating that the Harbin Jewish community entered its peak period. By the 1920s, the Harbin Jewish community had established their own cultural, educational and health welfare institutions like hospitals, schools, libraries, theaters, nursing homes, relief organizations, free kitchens and cemetery and had published a number of newspapers and magazines. The Jews also further expanded their business activities. They set up factories, trading firms, hotels, shops and banks, and actively engaged in and even played an important role in Harbin Stock Exchange. Since 1924, the Jewish merchant P. M. Kabalkin had served as chairman of the Stock Exchange for a long time. A second synagogue was built in Harbin, which was bigger and more impressive than the first one. In 1913, Rabbi Aron Moishe Kiseleff from Russia came to Harbin and later became the chief rabbi of the Harbin Jewish community. Dr. Abraham Kaufman, who migrated to Harbin from Russia in 1912, was the chief of the Community Council. He was first elected chairman of the Community Council in 1919 and held this position until 1945.

The Tianjin Jewish community, expanded rapidly after the Russian Revolution in 1917. By the 1920s, its members had reached about 1000. The number continued to grow as Jews went down south from Harbin after the Japanese occupation of Northeast China in 1931. However, there are significant differences about the number of Jews in Tianjin. Some estimate there were about 35,000 Jews in Tianjin in 1935,<sup>26</sup> some hold that the number was about 1500–1700,<sup>27</sup> and still some others believe that the total number of Jews in Tianjin never exceeded 2500.<sup>28</sup> The Jews in Tianjin were not as rich as those in Shanghai or Hong Kong, but their fur business ran very well. They processed furs that were purchased from Northeast and Northwest China and then exported them to Europe and America, making huge profits. The world economic crisis that broke out in 1929, however, hit their fur business badly, so some Jewish businessmen in Tianjin had to shift to other business. The famous fur trader Leo Gershevich was the major leader of the Tianjin Jewish community, long serving as director of relief association and other organizations. In addition to the above-mentioned cemetery and synagogues, the Tianjin Jewish community also established its own public institutions, such as hospitals, clubs, schools, nursing homes, and libraries. In 1940, the Jews in Tianjin built a big and beautiful synagogue to replace the old temporary one, and hired rabbi Levin to lead the religious activities. Tianjin Jewish School was built in 1925 to provide educational opportunities not only for Jewish kids in Tianjin but also for those from North China and elsewhere. The school taught Jewish religious and cultural history, as well as social sciences and natural

<sup>24</sup>Ravikovich (1918).

<sup>25</sup>The Bund, short for the General Jewish Labour Bund in Lithuania, Poland and Russia, was a left-wing organization.

<sup>26</sup>Jianchang (1996a).

<sup>27</sup>M. W. Beckman. The Jewish Community in Tianjin.

<sup>28</sup>Irene Eber. China and the Jews, p. 40.

sciences, in English. Most of its graduates were admitted to European and American universities. Established in 1928, the Tianjin Jewish Club was a center for cultural activities of the Jewish community. It had libraries, theaters, restaurants, chess rooms, snooker rooms and other cultural, entertainment and sports facilities.

The Jews in Hailar and Manchuria mainly ran fur, wood, sausage casing and transportation business. The number of Jews in Hailar and Manchuria increased after the Russian Revolution in 1917 and declined after 1931. According to a Japanese survey done in 1940, there were 130 Jews in Hailar and Manchuria.<sup>29</sup> A Japanese report in 1924 said that Hailar and Manchuria already had Jewish synagogues<sup>30</sup> and that they had been built based on previous prayer houses. The Jews in Hailar also established their communal association which consisted of a religious organization, a culture and education organization, and relief organization.<sup>31</sup> In Manchuria, there was also a similar organization called the Jewish Residents Association, which was established in 1926.<sup>32</sup> According to Manchukuo documents, there were Jewish schools both in Manchuria and Hailar in the 1930s. The Jewish school in Manchuria had 80 students and five faculty members in 1934.<sup>33</sup> However, some scholars believe that the two schools mentioned previously may probably refer to one same school.<sup>34</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century, Qiqihar already had Russian Jews. After 1917, the number of Russian Jewish residents increased. In 1918, a Jewish prayer house was open.<sup>35</sup> After the Japanese occupation of Northeast China in 1931, the number of Jewish residents in Qiqihar declined. According to Japanese statistics, there were 50 Jews in Qiqihar in 1940.<sup>36</sup>

The early Jewish expats in Dalian were mainly Russian soldiers, including Joseph Trumpeldor who later became a Zionist and war hero.<sup>37</sup> After the Russo-Japanese War, Russian troops withdrew but some Jewish soldiers and their families stayed behind. Now, the Russian Military Cemetery is still there in Lvshun. Later, more Russian Jews came to Dalian, especially after 1917. In Dalian, most of them traded fur, Western medicine and foods and ran restaurants, hotels, transportation and chemical enterprises. Many of their enterprises were branches or agents of Jewish companies in Europe, the United States, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Harbin. On December 8, 1929, the Dalian Jewish communal association was established.<sup>38</sup> The Japanese

<sup>29</sup> Manchurian Investigation Department (1940a).

<sup>30</sup> Fang Jianchang, Jews in Modern Inner Mongolia, p. 38.

<sup>31</sup> Fang Jianchang, Jews in Modern Inner Mongolia, p. 39.

<sup>32</sup> Fang Jianchang, Jews in Modern Inner Mongolia, p. 41.

<sup>33</sup> Fang Jianchang, Jews in Modern Inner Mongolia, pp. 39, 41.

<sup>34</sup> Fang Jianchang, Jews in Modern Inner Mongolia, p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> Jianchang (1997b).

<sup>36</sup> Manchurian Investigation Department (1940).

<sup>37</sup> Yosef Trumpeldor, born in Russia, was promoted to an officer after joining the army. He was stationed in Dalian and lost his left arm in the Russo-Japanese War. Later he moved to Palestine, and became the head of the early Zionist military organization. He was killed in the battle with the Arabs. The Revisionist Zionist youth organization “Betar” was named in his honor (Berit Trumpeldor). See the Appendix II of Chap. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Lerner (1999).

occupation of Northeast China had little impact on the Jews in Dalian as Dalian was already under the control of Japanese forces. Some Jews left Harbin for Dalian after the kidnap of Simon Kaspe, which drove up the number of Jews in Dalian. According to Japanese statistics, there were 259 Jews in Dalian in 1940.<sup>39</sup> The Jews in Dalian established their own club under the communal association which had a prayer rooms, a library, offices and a conference room.<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that the Jews in Dalian had not established a formal synagogue, and their religious ceremonies were held in the prayer room in the Jewish club. The Jews in Dalian were mainly Russians, besides a small number of Sephardi Jews and Jewish refugees from Central Europe.

The number of Russian Jews in Shenyang declined after the Russo-Japanese War. Later, after the Russian Revolution in 1917, the number of Jews in Shenyang increased. After the Japanese occupation of Northeast China, some Jews left Shenyang but the number of Jews there didn't drop sharply, just like the case of Dalian, because Jews came down from North Manchukuo. According to Japanese statistics, there were about 100 Jews in Shenyang in 1940.<sup>41</sup> Shenyang Jewish Association began operations after 1937, offering relief to the poor Jews, helping Jewish refugees to get employed, donating to the Palestine National Fund, donating to help the victims of flood in Tianjin, donating to help the Japanese sick and wounded, and establishing a library with a collection of 3850 copies.<sup>42</sup> Its chairman was A. Janovich in 1938.<sup>43</sup> The Jews in Shenyang did not establish a formal synagogue either.

Although the earliest Jews who settled in Qingdao came from Germany, it was the arrival of a large number of Russian Jews after the Russian revolution in 1917 that turned Qingdao into a Jewish settlement. According to statistics, at the end of 1939, there were about 220 Jews in Qingdao, including 173 stateless people, many of whom were Russian Jews.<sup>44</sup> As the Nazi anti-Semitism worsened, 65 German-speaking Jewish refugees from central Europe arrived in Qingdao in 1940, adding more German feature to the local Jewish community.<sup>45</sup> In the 1920s, the Jews in Qingdao established the Jewish Federation of Qingdao which consisted of a Jewish club, a temporary prayer house, and a rabbi's house. G. E. Timberman was its chairman and V. M. Tovabinski was the vice chairman.<sup>46</sup> The Jews in Qingdao mainly ran ballrooms, restaurants, bars, barbershops, hospitals and clinics, clothing stores and musical instruments stores. Their customers were boat crew and rich people who spent their holiday at the summer resort, and their businesses were once very profitable. At first, many Jewish children in Qingdao went to German schools, but

<sup>39</sup>Jianchang and Wei (1997).

<sup>40</sup>Lerner (1999).

<sup>41</sup>Jianchang and Wei (1997, p. 88).

<sup>42</sup>Jianchang and Wei (1997, pp. 87, 88).

<sup>43</sup>Jianchang (1997b).

<sup>44</sup>Jianchang (1997c).

<sup>45</sup>Matzat (2001).

<sup>46</sup>Fang Jianchang (1997b, p. 87).

after 1938, Jewish students were driven out of the school, due to the influence of the Nazi anti-Semitic policy.<sup>47</sup>

As mentioned above, the Jews in Beijing were mainly diplomats and scholars, including Lev Karakhan (the Soviet ambassador to China), Rudolf Loewenthal (professor of Yenching University, German Jew), and Franz Weidenrich (director of the Anatomical Department of Concord Hospital, German Jew). According to Japanese statistics, there were 120 Jews in Beijing in 1940.<sup>48</sup> Since some diplomats and scholars tried to hide their Jewish origins and changed their workplaces frequently, the number must be inaccurate. Unlike Jews in other Chinese cities mentioned above, the Jews in Beijing had their own formal jobs, did not form a communal organization or establish a prayer house. Therefore, Beijing could not be defined as a Jewish settlement.

In summary, the immigration of Russian Jews to northern China contributed to the development of Jewish communities in Harbin and Tianjin, and the Jewish settlements in Manchuria, Hailar, Qiqihar, Shenyang, Dalian and Qingdao. At the same time, many Jewish people scattered in some other cities, such as Beijing.

### ***18.2.3 Settlement of the Russian Jews in Shanghai and Hong Kong***

Since the late 19th century, some Russian Ashkenazi Jews began to settle in Shanghai. According to some sources, Haimovich who came to Shanghai in 1887 was probably the first Russian Jew to settle in Shanghai.<sup>49</sup> Later, some Russian Jewish businesses, including the tea company W. Wissotsky & Co., set up their branches or agencies in Shanghai. However, before 1902, the number of Russian Jews in Shanghai was small, so they didn't need an independent synagogue. They usually attended religious activities together with the Sephardi Jews. As the Russian Jewish population in Shanghai increased, they established their own synagogue committee in 1902, chaired by H. Kmmerling, and rented a house and turned it into the Ohel Moishe Synagogue.

In 1926, the Russian Jewish community of Shanghai invited Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi to Shanghai. Born in Russia in 1891, Meir Ashkenazi was a religious scholar belonging to the most orthodox Russian Lubavitch school of Hasidism.<sup>50</sup> After arriving in Shanghai, Meir Ashkenazi became the rabbi of the Ohel Moishe Synagogue and the spiritual leader of the Russian Jews in Shanghai. Later, his authority gradually rose among all the Jews in Shanghai. Not only the Ashkenazi Jews from Russia

<sup>47</sup> Matzat (2001).

<sup>48</sup> Jianchang (1997c, p. 10).

<sup>49</sup> Victor (1985).

<sup>50</sup> Hasidism is a Jewish religious group, which arose in Poland during the eighteenth century. Hasidic thought focuses on sensibility and spirituality, emphasizing the diversity of worship.

and Poland but also the Sephardi Jews trusted him and consulted him concerning religious laws. He later served as chief rabbi of Shanghai until 1949.

Under Meir Ashkenazi, the Ohel Moishe Synagogue moved to Ward Road, Hongkou (now 62 Changyang Road). In the new synagogue, special seats were exclusively set up for women in accordance with the Jewish law. During the 1930s, the number of Russian Jews in Shanghai rose to more than 4000, obviously exceeding the capacity of the Ohel Moishe Synagogue in Hongkou. Consequently, the Russian Jews in Shanghai planned to build a new synagogue. In November 1937, the Russian Jewish community of Shanghai purchased a plot of land in the French Concession, and established a synagogue construction committee to take charge of building the new synagogue. Many Russian Jews donated to the project. For example, Matchison donated 24,000 British sterlings, Mrs. Pisarevskaya donated 10,000 fabi (a Chinese legal tender circulating from 1935 to 1948 in China), and Turgu the timber merchant donated building timber worth about 25,000–30,000 fabi.<sup>51</sup> The new synagogue was completed just before the Passover in 1941 and was named the “New Synagogue”. The New Synagogue could hold 1000 people. It was commonly called the la Tour Synagogue as it was located at 102 Route Tenant de la Tour (now South Xiangyang Road).

As most Russian Jews in Shanghai were stateless, they had belonged to the White Russian Emigrants Committee of Shanghai, a body created by the non-Jewish Russian stateless refugees in 1926. In the committee, they were represented by the Russian Jewish Community in Shanghai Ohel Moishe Synagogue. However, the White Russian Emigrants Committee of Shanghai had a strong anti-Semitic tendency, which threatened the legitimate rights and interests of the Russian Jews. Therefore, in 1932, the Russia Jews in Shanghai formed their splinter group - the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association (SAJCA). The establishment of SAJCA caused controversy within the White Russian Emigrants Committee of Shanghai. General Glebov, leader of the Committee, alleged that SAJCA was controlled by the Soviet Union and denied the representation of SAJCA. SAJCA issued an independence declaration, announcing that it had nothing to do with the White Russian Emigrants Committee of Shanghai.<sup>52</sup> In 1937, SAJCA was registered with Shanghai Municipal Council.

SAJCA had a presidium and committees to deal with issues related to religion, education, poverty relief, funeral, health care and external liaison. It also supervised the operation of Jewish institutions, including the synagogues, loan offices, nursing homes, burial houses and relief organizations. Due to its strict organization rules and considerate services, SAJCA won the trust and support of the Russian Jews, so its membership and influence grew. Gradually, SAJCA became a major Jewish institution in Shanghai and a representative of the Jewish community in Shanghai. On the contrary, SJCA only represented the Sephardi Jews.

Most Russian Jews had a strong Zionist tendency, so a number of Zionist organizations were established in Harbin. After arriving in Shanghai, the Russian Jews

<sup>51</sup> Manchurian Investigation Department (1940b).

<sup>52</sup> Zhicheng (1993).

participated in the Zionist activities organized by the Sephardi Jews, while they also built their own Zionist organization. The establishment of the Jewish unit of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps (SVC) was a real pride for the Russian Jewish community and even for the entire Jewish community in Shanghai. The SVC was set up in April 1853. At that time, the Taiping Rebellion shocked the whole country, and the Small Swords Society also scared foreigners in Shanghai. As a result, the foreign consuls in Shanghai held an emergency meeting and mobilized foreigners of different nationalities in Shanghai to form an armed force to safeguard their businesses and assets. The SVC only had about 200 members when it was established. In 1870, the Shanghai Municipal Council took it over, and then it grew quickly. By the end of the 1920s, the SVC had 2000 members. SVC teams exercised independently, usually once a week. They did not receive any payment or allowance but each was responsible for taking care of the uniforms and weapons issued to them by SVC. In summer 1932, some young Russian Jews from Harbin met at a location on Jing'an Temple Road (now West Nanjing Road), which proposed forming a Jewish unit of the SVC. Soon afterwards, they submitted their request to the head of the SVC and then got the approval on the premise that the Jewish unit belonged to one of the existing companies. Later, the Jews became part of “H” Company under Captain C. C. Todd. The Jewish unit was formally established on September 22, 1932. Noel S. Jacobs, who had been responsible for Jewish Boy Scout Troop training for many years, was appointed Second Lieutenant to command the Jewish unit. The other sergeants of the unit were Robert B. Bitker and Emmanuel M. Talan. They were experienced veterans from the Russian detachment and field gun detachment. Two months later, a second Jewish unit was established. Sergeant Bitker was promoted to Second Lieutenant and was responsible for commanding the new unit. Second Lieutenant Jacobs was promoted to Lieutenant. Given the strong enthusiasm of the two Jewish units, it became natural and necessary to set up an independent Jewish detachment within the SVC. On May 22, 1933, the non-Jewish personnel of “H” Company were transferred to “B” Company. “H” Company became all Jewish and Jacobs got promoted. After its establishment, the Jewish detachment progressed steadily in military training and many other aspects.<sup>53</sup> Later, Lieutenant Talan left Shanghai for Hong Kong, Lieutenant Bitker went to Palestine in October 1936, and Sergeants Simon Godkin and William Goldenberg were appointed Second Lieutenants. In 1938, after Bitker returned from Palestine, the Jewish detachment had four officers, including Captain Jacobs, second-in-command Lieutenant Godkin, Lieutenant Goldenberg and Lieutenant Bitker. The Jewish detachment gained steady development, thus winning high recognition of the leaders of the SVC. Colonel B. W. B. Thoms, commandant of the SVC, suggested that the motto of the Jewish detachment “No Advance without Security” be the motto of the SVC. In mobilizations of the SVC in 1937 and 1938, the Jewish unit received awards from the Shanghai Municipal Council for its outstanding performance. In addition, the Jewish Company also won the SVC Sharpshooter Shield Emblem and the Kadoorie Cup from the Kadoories for recognizing sharpshooters.<sup>54</sup> At first, the

<sup>53</sup> She (1984).

<sup>54</sup> Eighty-five Years of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, Shanghai, p. 216.

Jewish soldiers wearing the Yellow Badge were all Russian Jews, as the Sephardi Jews joined the British Company. Later, a small number of Sephardi Jews and Central European Jews joined the Jewish unit. In 1942, the SVC was disbanded by the Japanese occupation forces, and the Jewish unit ended. Captain Jacobs was interned by the Japanese after the Pearl Harbor attack and was held until the end of the war.<sup>55</sup>

The Russian Jews also founded Shanghai Jewish Club. It began construction in January 1932 on Avenue Road (now West Beijing Road). Many well-known Russian Jews attended the foundation stone laying ceremony, including Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi. In August, the Club was open with only 75 members, but the number rose up to 200 in 1933. In April 1947, the Club moved to a new site, a garden house provided by a Jewish tycoon on Route Pichon (now Fenyang Road) in the French Concession. M. Bloch, one of the leaders of the Russian Jewish community and owner of a wood products enterprise, was a co-founder and permanent president of the Club. Levigin and Bitkel were the vice presidents of the Club. The Club often held various cultural and educational activities, becoming the activity center of the Russian Jewish community. It had a library of books donated by Jewish organizations and individuals, including Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi's collection of Hebrew and Yiddish books. The Russian Jews in Shanghai also established a relief organization, a retirement home, an educational aid society, a burial house, a hospital and clinics. In the mid-1930s, the number of Russian Jews in Shanghai exceeded 5000, far more than the Sephardi Jews.

In general, most Russian Jews arrived in Shanghai penniless. They borrowed money to start small businesses. Through their hard work, they gradually became the middle class in Shanghai, along with businessmen, professional technicians and men of letters. Some of them became tycoons. Unlike the Sephardi Jews who valued their British citizenship, the Russian Jews would stay in China rather than return to their homeland in Russia. They managed to adapt to the Chinese culture and maintained good relations with the local Chinese. Some of them learned to speak Mandarin and even Shanghainese, and some were married to Chinese. Although they were not as rich as the Sephardi Jews, the Russian Jews later became the most active Jewish community in Shanghai. With a large population and a strong sense of community, they organized many events.

Meanwhile, some Russian Jews who fled the Russian Revolution and Civil War and went to Hong Kong, after a short stay in Northeast China. In the 1930s, the Chinese mainland was caught in war after the Japanese aggression. Therefore, some Russian Jews went further south to Hong Kong. Their arrival undermined the dominance of the Sephardi Jews in Hong Kong, diversifying the Jewish community. Although the synagogue in Hong Kong was built in accordance with the Sephardi tradition, the religious rituals were more and more carried out in the Ashkenazi way. That was because many Sephardi Jews entered the upper class in Hong Kong and became less active in participating in Judaic religious activities. On the contrary, the Russian Jews, who were mainly stateless refugees or new immigrants, cared more about their religious background and tradition, and they were more active in religious

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<sup>55</sup>Krasno (2009).

occasions. However, the Sephardi Jews were more powerful than the Ashkenazi Jews economically, so they played the role of financial supports of the community's religious and cultural activities.

### 18.3 Jewish Communities in Harbin, Tianjin, Shanghai and Hong Kong Before the Arrival of European Refugees

**Harbin** Since the late 1920s, the Jewish communities in Harbin and other cities in Northeast China had suffered from a series of external shocks and gradually declined. First, the Sino-Soviet competition for management rights of the CER and the resulting conflicts damped the economic prosperity of the Jewish community. After the October Revolution of 1917, the Soviet government issued a proclamation to the Chinese government, promising to turn over the CER management rights to China. However, the Peiyang administration did not recognize the Soviet Union regime and maintained the relationship with the former Russian regime, so the CER remained under the control of Russians. After the Secret Protocol of March 14, 1924 and the Secret Agreement of September 20, 1924, China and the Soviet Union jointly managed the CER. The joint management ended after the Sino-Soviet conflict of 1929. In 1935, the Soviet Union sold the railway to the newly formed Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo for 170 million Japanese yen.<sup>56</sup> The shift of management right over the CER greatly increased the economic strength of the Japanese and Chinese in Northeast China, which affected the Jewish businesses that had thrived on the development of the CER, as well as the whole Jewish community. At the same time, a series of conflicts between China, Japan, and the Soviet Union also shook Harbin and Northeast China. The Jewish businesses lost the environment that had supported their growth. Second, the stock market crash of 1929 and the resulting global economic crisis caused serious harm to the Jewish economy in Harbin, especially to the Jews engaged in international trade and fur industry. These companies had mainly exported their products to the United States and Europe. The increase in freight costs and other expenses led to a sharp rise in their operating costs. With the decline in orders, their business busted.<sup>57</sup> A large number of Jews were forced to close their businesses, leaving Harbin for Tianjin and Shanghai. Some even went to Europe and the United States to get support from their relatives and friends. Third, the Japanese occupation of Northeast China in 1931 and the establishment of Manchukuo in 1932 also shocked the Jewish community. The rule of the Peiyang government or the KMT government had been very lenient, which was critical for the rapid development of the Jewish economy. However, the Japanese authorities applied strict restrictions and established a centralized system to control the economy. In this way, the Harbin Jewish community lost the favorable external environment for development. After the

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<sup>56</sup>Ding (2005).

<sup>57</sup>Weirong (2008).

Manchukuo regime finally gained control over the CER, some Jewish businessmen lost the major source of business. The Japanese also imposed restrictive policies on economic activities in Harbin, stifling many Jewish trading companies and stores.

What's worse, in the early days of Japanese occupation, anti-Semitic activities, started by White Russians and supported by the Japanese and German fascists, erupted again and again in Harbin.<sup>58</sup> A Russian National Socialist organization, funded by Nazi Germany and secretly supported by some Japanese, was established in Harbin.<sup>59</sup> The organization published an anti-Semitic newspaper that published vicious anti-Semitic propaganda, frequently ravaged Jewish shops, schools, shattered glass windows of the synagogue, and kidnapped Jewish businessmen. The anti-Semitic activities in Harbin came to their peak when Simeon Kaspe, son of the Hotel Moderne's owner Joseph Kaspe, was kidnapped and killed. Joseph Kaspe came to Harbin from Russia in 1907. In the early 1930s, he rose as a star Jewish merchant in Harbin and got French citizenship. The Hotel Moderne in downtown Harbin was his asset. His son Simon was a brilliant pianist and a student of the Paris Conservatory of Music. In August 1933, when Simon returned home with his girlfriend on vacation, he was kidnapped and killed during a trip. Soon, the Jewish communities in Harbin and Shanghai protested to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on this atrocity. The Harbin Jewish community held a grand funeral for Simon. Thousands of Harbin residents, including Jews, Chinese and foreign nationals, attended the funeral and shouted slogans against the Japanese authorities and demanded that the murderer must be brought to justice.<sup>60</sup> In 1934, the Japanese-created Bureau for the Affairs of Russian Émigrés was established in Harbin under the Ministry of Home Affairs of Manchukuo, mainly to monitor Russian Jews in Harbin and other parts of Manchukuo.<sup>61</sup> In this deteriorating living environment, the Harbin Jewish community declined. From 1932 to the first half of 1936, 31 Jewish stores went bankrupt. By the mid-1930s, almost 70% of Harbin Jews had left the city.<sup>61</sup> The number of Jewish residents in Harbin fell to around 8000 in 1935 and dropped further to 5000 by 1939.<sup>62</sup>

**Tianjin** The global economic crisis starting in 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression shocked the fur export business of Jews in Tianjin. In the following years, many Jewish fur traders in Tianjin shifted to other businesses. As mentioned above, it was estimated that there were around 3500 Jews in Tianjin in 1935. But the number of Tianjin Jews declined after Japanese occupation. In 1939, the estimated number of Jews in Tianjin was around 1800. After anti-Semitic persecution worsened in Europe, some European Jews fled to Tianjin. According to the Report on Tianjin Refugees delivered to the third Far East Jewish Conference, by December 8, 1939, 169 European Jewish refugees were given entry permits to Tianjin, 56 of whom had arrived

<sup>58</sup>It was based on the interview of Isador Magid on October 20, 1997 in Melbourne.

<sup>59</sup>Vespa (1990).

<sup>60</sup>Jianchang (1996b).

<sup>61</sup>Marvin Tokayer and Mary Swartz. *The Fugu Plan*, p. 37.

<sup>62</sup>Dicker (1962, p. 42).

in Tianjin, while 128 refugees were still waiting for their entry permits.<sup>63</sup> After the Pearl Harbor Attack in December 1941, the Japanese authorities in Tianjin closed all British and American schools. Therefore, the Jewish School became the only local school that could provide English education to foreign children. Consequentially, the number of non-Jewish students surged in the Jewish School.<sup>64</sup> Thanks to the Soviet protection, the Jews in Tianjin lived a stable life during the Japanese occupation, as most of the Jews in Tianjin were Russian. All stateless Russian expats, including Russian Jews, could apply for the Soviet citizenship to the Consulate of the Soviet Union in Tianjin. Many Russian Jews did. Although their applications were not formally handled during the war, the Consulate issued a certificate to each applicant to recognize the reception of their applications. The certificates spelt into a strong protection for the Jews in Tianjin. Under the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, the Japanese authorities refrained from persecuting the Tianjin Jews under the Soviet protection.

It should be noted that there were some active leftist Jews in Tianjin. Some of them participated in Chinese War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. For instance, Israel Epstein was influenced by the December 9th Movement during his stay in Tianjin and Edgar Snow, an American journalist reporting the Communist movement in China. Soon after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, Israel Epstein and Edgar Snow helped Zhou Enlai's wife Madame Deng Yingchao evacuate to Tianjin and then to Shanghai.<sup>65</sup>

**Shanghai** In the mid-1930s, there were around 5000 Russian Jews in Shanghai, far more than the Sephardi Jews (around 1000). In general, most Russian Jews had arrived in Shanghai penniless. They borrowed money to start small businesses. Through their hard work, they gradually became the middle class in Shanghai, including businessmen, professional technicians and men of letters. Unlike the Sephardi Jews who valued their British identity, the Russian Jews didn't consider themselves as Russian citizens. Instead of returning back to their “homeland” in Russia, they would rather settle in China. They managed to adapt to the Chinese culture and maintained good relations with the local Chinese. Some of them learned to speak Mandarin and even Shanghainese, and some were married to Chinese. Although they were not as rich as the Sephardi Jews, the Russian Jews later became the most active Jewish community in Shanghai. With a large population and a strong sense of community, they organized many events.

By the early 1940s, the number of Jews in Shanghai had exceeded 30,000, including the Sephardi Jews, the Russian Jews and Jewish refugees from Europe under the Nazis. They formed the largest Jewish community in the Far East. The prosperous Jewish community in Shanghai had its own Jewish communal associations, synagogues, schools, hospitals, clubs, cemetery, trade associations, publications, political organizations (especially the Zionist organization) and a small armed force, the Jewish unit under the SVC. After the Pearl Harbor Attack, the Sephardi Jews suffered

<sup>63</sup>Jianchang (1996a, p. 56).

<sup>64</sup>M.W. Beckman. “The Jewish Community in Tianjin”.

<sup>65</sup>Epstein (2004).

from Japanese persecution as enemy aliens. The Russian Jews, however, were safe and free under the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact. Unlike the Jewish community in Harbin and Tianjin where the Ashkenazi culture was predominant, or the Jewish community in Hong Kong which was mainly Sephardic, the Jewish community in Shanghai blended the Sephardic culture, the Ashkenazi culture, and the Central European Jewish culture. That was a rare case in the Jewish diaspora worldwide but resembled the future Israeli culture and American Jewish culture.

**Hong Kong** From the outbreak of World War I in 1914 to the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong in December 1941, the Jewish population in Hong Kong remained stable at several hundred. According to an article published in 1914, the Ohel Leah Synagogue could host about 500 people. That does not mean the Hong Kong Jewish community had 500 members. In 1933, according to someone who visited Hong Kong, the Jewish community had 50 to 75 families. A publication in 1936 estimated that there were about 100 Jews in Hong Kong. But that was obviously smaller than the actual number. A recent article mentioned that, according to a report in February 1939, 2500 Jews moved to Hong Kong from Shanghai and by the end of that year, the number of Jews moving from Shanghai to Hong Kong went up to 17,000.<sup>66</sup> They were European Jewish refugees. As mentioned earlier, the influx of Jewish refugees into Shanghai peaked in 1939. It was highly probable for some of them to travel to Hong Kong or then move on to other places via Hong Kong. There are two points worth mentioning. First, 17,000 was clearly an overestimate because the total number of Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai was only 20,000–30,000. Second, 2500 is reasonable, but most of them did not stay long in Hong Kong because the number of Jews living in Hong Kong during World War II never exceeded 1000.

After the outbreak of the War of Resistance in 1937, the Sephardi Jewish merchants in mainland China suffered a great loss. They were forced to transfer their assets to Hong Kong. After the Pacific War broke out, Japan attacked Hong Kong. The Jews in Hong Kong joined the Chinese and British people in defending Hong Kong. Dr. Solomon Matthew Bard, a Russian Jew, joined the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps where he had not only rescued the wounded but also participated in battles. After the war, because of his courage and his contribution to the defence of Hong Kong, Dr. Bard was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and the Medal of Honor by the British Government. The Kadoories bombed up their power plant to prevent power facilities from falling into the hands of the Japanese. At the same time, Morris Cohen, major-general of the Chinese National Revolutionary Army, happened to be in Hong Kong, trying to rally support for the Chinese army fighting in the Chinese mainland. He participated in the defence battles until Hong Kong fell. He was imprisoned as a prisoner of war for nearly two years. He was released in a prisoner exchange between Japan and Canada. He languished in the prison and was only 80 lb when he was released.<sup>67</sup> Shortly after his release, he returned to China

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<sup>66</sup>Weijie (n.d.).

<sup>67</sup>Levy (1997).

to participate in the War of Resistance again. 13 Jews died in the defence of Hong Kong. There is still a monument in their honor in the synagogue of Hong Kong.<sup>68</sup>

After the Japanese occupation, the Hong Kong Jewish community, especially the Sephardi Jewish merchants, suffered the greatest blow in its history. Regarded as enemy aliens, the Sephardi Jews were sent to concentration camps and dispossessed of their businesses and assets. Victor Sassoon luckily escaped the sufferings as he was not in China when the Pacific War broke out. However, the Sassoons' assets in Hong Kong were confiscated and their Chinese and British employees were all imprisoned. The Kadoories were less lucky. The whole family were imprisoned and the head of the family, Sir Elly Kadoorie, died in prison in 1944.<sup>69</sup> The main business of the Kadoories, China Light & Power Company Syndicate, as well as the Peninsula Hotel Group and the Peak Tram, were taken over by the Japanese authorities. The president of China Light and Power Company Syndicate, A. H. Compton, was jailed.<sup>70</sup> During that period, the Sephardi merchants actually lost all their wealth in Hong Kong and other Japan-controlled areas in China. In short, the War of Resistance meant as much to Jews in Hong Kong as to the Chinese. Jews suffered as the Chinese people did, and they fought as hard as their Chinese neighbors. They spent the difficult years together. It should be mentioned that during the Japanese occupation, Russian Jews, with their neutral status as Soviet citizens, managed to claim some Sephardi Jews' properties as their own, so that Jews in Hong Kong could continue to run their businesses. However, it was very difficult and there was hardly any growth.

## 18.4 Support of Sephardi Jews and Russian Jews for European Refugees in China

In 1933, the first batch of German Jewish immigrants to China were intellectuals, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers and entrepreneurs, and had brought some wealth with them to Shanghai. With the help of the Shanghai Jewish Community, they soon found jobs and enjoyed a comfortable life.

However, the European Jewish refugees fleeing to Shanghai in 1938 were miserable. They were penniless and many of them were even injured. The Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities in Shanghai provided accommodation and relief to these refugees. On August 8, 1938, the International Committee for Granting Relief to European Refugees (IC) was set up by the Sephardi Jews and chaired by the Hungarian Jew Paul Komor. The Abrahams and the Toegs, two rich Sephardi families, opened a public kitchen, while Sir Ellice Victor Sassoon offered the Embankment Building as a temporary shelter. The Beth Aharon Synagogue also set up a kitchen and a shelter. In order to strengthen cooperation and relief coordination, in October 1938, Horace Kadoorie called a meeting of representatives of the Shanghai Jew-

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<sup>68</sup>Guang (2005).

<sup>69</sup>Fang Jianchang (1996a, p. 8).

<sup>70</sup>Siu-tong and Si (2001).

ish Community and IC, and established the Committee for Assistance of European Refugees in Shanghai (CFA). On the board of directors of the CFA, the representatives of the Sephardi Jews were Mendell Brown, D. E. J. Abraham and his son Reuben D. Abraham, the representatives of the Russian Jews were Rabbi Meir Ashkennaz, L. Greenberg and H. Kammerling, and the representatives of the German Jews were Dr. B Rosenberg and Dr. Kurt Marx. Later on, the CFA was also called the Speelman Committee, since it was chaired by the Jewish financier Michel Speelman. By the end of 1938, the CFA had raised about 8000 USD.

Aiming to helping Jewish refugees establish small and mid-sized businesses to achieve self-sufficiency, Elly Kadoorie, Michel Speelman and Ellis Hayim and other Jewish leaders founded the Rehabilitation Fund under the IC in January 1939. Sir Victor Sassoon donated 150,000 USD to the Fund.<sup>71</sup> By December 1939, around 3300 refugees, including 1300 Jewish refugees and their families, were able to make a decent living. Since January 1939, the CFA had set up a number of Jewish refugee camps on Alcock Road (now Anguo Road), Chaofoong Road (now Gaoyang Road), Seward Road (now Changzhi Road), Ward Road (now Changyang Road) and Way-side Road (now Huoshan Road).<sup>72</sup>

Since the aforementioned Jewish organizations in Shanghai were connected with the United States and Europe, Jewish organizations abroad were rather well informed of the situation of Jewish refugees in Shanghai. In summer 1937, international Jewish organizations began to help the Jewish organizations in Shanghai deal with the influx of Jewish refugees. In 1938, HICEM<sup>73</sup> set up an office in Shanghai, and moved its Far East branch from Harbin to Shanghai in 1939 to provide such services as liaison, consulting and loans to Jewish refugees in Shanghai. In 1938, the JDC also set up an office in Shanghai and sent a resident representative to Shanghai who was mandated to report the situation of Jewish refugees in Shanghai at regular intervals. The JDC played a critical role in assisting Jewish refugees in Shanghai, donating more than any other Jewish organizations or individuals abroad. According to statistics, the majority of the relief fund for Jewish refugees in Shanghai came from the JDC.<sup>74</sup> It raised a large amount of donations in the United States for Shanghai Jewish refugees, averaging 30,000 USD per month.<sup>75</sup> It is worth noting that in March 1941, with the support of the JDC, Eastern European Jews and Russian Jews in Shanghai set up the Committee for Assistance of Eastern European Jews (EASTJEWCOM or EJC) to provide relief for Eastern European Jewish refugees in Shanghai, especially Polish Jews.

When refugee kids overwhelmed the existing Shanghai Jewish School, the Kadoories set up the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association School, also known as the Kadoorie School. Those who couldn't afford their tuition were admitted free of charge. The number of students remained around 700 during the war years. The

<sup>71</sup>Shanghai Municipal Archives, U1-4-2971.

<sup>72</sup>Shanghai Municipal Archives, U1-4-0277.

<sup>73</sup>See Chap. 2, Sect. 2.2.

<sup>74</sup>Pan Guang & Wang Jian, Shanghai Jews for One and a Half Centuries, p. 54.

<sup>75</sup>Marvin Tokayer, The Fugu Plan, p. 35.

School earned a great reputation among Jewish refugees for its faculty and teaching quality. In August 1941, when more than 400 rabbis and students from the Mir Yeshiva in Poland and other yeshivas arrived in Shanghai, the Shanghai Jewish community immediately offered them the Beth Aharon Synagogue. Besides, the Russian Jewish community in Shanghai got in touch with the JDC headquarters in the United States through the EJC and got a considerable fund from the JDC to transport textbooks of the Mir Yeshiva to Shanghai via several countries.

At the same time, the Harbin Jewish community also managed to accommodate refugees from Germany and Austria. For example, 19 Jewish refugees, including a famous pianist and composer from Vienna, his band and his families, were very well received by the local Jewish relief organization of Harbin. Under the Jewish community congress in Harbin, the Jewish community in Dalian turned Dalian into a gate for Jewish refugees to enter Northeast China from Shanghai. According to an article on Israel's Messenger, a batch of Jewish refugees arrived in Shanghai aboard on an Italian liner in January 1939, among whom 20 planned to go to Dalian. Finally, around 300 immigrants obtained residence permits from the Dalian Port authority.<sup>76</sup> In December 1939, Judas Canel, a stateless Jewish businessman who attended the third Far East Jewish Community Conference as a representative of the Jewish community in Dalian, said that in summer 1939, Jewish businessman Bill Breyer built a shelter for refugee children in Dalian. The shelter took in 50 poor refugee children coming from Shanghai, including 34 boys and 16 girls, and it was co-financed by the Jewish communities of Harbin and Dalian.<sup>77</sup>

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the JDC was forced to stop remitting money to Japan-occupied Shanghai. At that time, Japan and the Soviet Union were not at war. Therefore, under the cover of their citizenship of a “neutral state”, Russian Jews engaged more actively in refugee relief, even though they were not well-off. Some Russian Jews established the EJC which supported at least 600 to 700 Central and Eastern European Jewish children in dire poverty.<sup>78</sup> The Kitchen Fund, established by German and Austrian Jewish refugees, also launched a “Patenschaft” campaign to raise contributions on regular monthly basis. Each contribution could be between 50 and 100 yuan. Altogether, the campaign mobilized more than 900 contributions.<sup>79</sup>

To sum up, in the 1930s, while most Jewish communities in Europe were struggling to survive while no Jewish communities were formed in Latin America. However, there had already been a well-organized Jewish community in China that had operated for a century, similar to the case in the United Kingdom and the United States. Although the Jewish communities in the United Kingdom and the United States were far bigger and more powerful than the Jewish community in China, they still failed to get their governments to open the door to Jews fleeing Nazi persecution, mainly due to the anti-Semitic tendency in their countries and the economic depression.

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<sup>76</sup>Israel's Messenger, 20 January 1939.

<sup>77</sup>Jianchang (1997d).

<sup>78</sup>Kranzler (1976).

<sup>79</sup>Guang and Jian (2002).

Their problems didn't exist in China. Therefore, the Jewish community in China could receive European Jewish refugees to China and offer them timely relief.

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# Chapter 19

## Characteristic IV of the “Chinese Pattern”: Jewish Refugees Having a High Level of Cultural Literacy



European Jewish refugees in China, generally speaking, were well-educated. They had managed to overcome so many challenges and survived the tough years and then succeeded in rebuilding their homeland after the war mainly because of their education background.

### 19.1 Jewish Refugees in China Already Well Educated

Among the Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, Poland and other countries, many were outstanding intellectuals and professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, architects, accountants, business executives, editors, journalists, writers, actors, painters, musicians and skilled workers from all walks of life. They could help each other during hard times.

There were a large number of medical workers among the refugees and over 200 of them were physicians. In late 1938, they established a clinic in the refugee camp. In March 1939, they opened the first refugee hospital with 60 beds. According to the 1940 annual report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, the Jewish Refugee Hospital on Ward Road had 120 beds and X-ray, dental, ophthalmology, and obstetrics departments. The income of the hospital was enough to cover its expenses.<sup>1</sup>

The refugee teachers managed to continue children education and teaching adults professional skills under difficult conditions. Some of them became key teachers of the two schools receiving refugee children. Polish Jews also brought the Orthodox Jewish education system to China. For example, the knowledgeable Orthodox rabbis from the Mir Yeshiva brought rigorous religious rituals and education to Shanghai. Reformist rabbis from Germany also managed to attract the unorthodox Jews among the refugees to participate in religious activities. These further strengthened the collective identity awareness of the refugees.

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<sup>1</sup>*Annual Report of Shanghai Municipal Council (1940)*, p. 472.

Some Jewish refugees, who had once worked as editors and journalists, published their own newspapers and magazines. From 1939, they managed to publish many German and Yiddish publications at the same time. Many of these publications were influential: (1) Shanghai Woche, a German weekly newspaper, which mainly covered world political news, and also reported local news and news about expatriates in Shanghai; (2) Acht Uhr Abendblatt der Shanghai Woche, a German evening news, focusing on news about Jewish refugees; (3) Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, originally a weekly newspaper and later a daily newspaper, the longest-standing German newspaper; (4) Die Gelbe Post, a German monthly newspaper established by psychologist A. J. Storfer who was a student of Sigmund Freud, mainly covering cultural events, political news and local news with anti-Nazi and socialist ideology; and (5) Unser Wort, a Yiddish magazine founded by the Polish Jews.

There were many artists among the Jewish refugees in China, including some who had already enjoyed great reputation in Europe, such as pianist and conductor Hans Henri Margolinsky, conductor Fritz Prager, violinist Alfred Wittenberg, cellist and conductor Leo Schoenbach, cellist Johann Kraus, singer Ernst Krasso, jazz singer Heinz Korotoschinsky, film director Fleck and movie star and singer Lilly Flohr. They set up professional associations in music, chorus, painting and so on to mobilize refugee artists. By late 1941, they had formed at least 17 bands. The bands not only performed Jewish religious music and ethnic music, but also Western classical music and light music. Musicians like Hans Henri Margolinsky, Alfred Wittenberg and Leo Schoenbach were often invited to perform at the Jewish Club.<sup>2</sup> From 1939 to 1947, Jewish refugees staged at least 60 German plays or dramas and helped redevelop the Jewish amateur dramatic club through creating Yiddish operettas and musicals. It is worth noting that the refugee artists performed Yiddish dramas in Shanghai for the first time in history. The famous Austrian pianist and conductor VeriMoishe Jinger and his band promoted music among the Jews and local people in Harbin. In short, the Jewish refugee artists had enriched the cultural life of the Jewish communities in Shanghai, Harbin and other cities, together with Russian Jewish artists.

Compared with professors and lawyers, engineers and technicians among Jewish refugees could make a decent living more easily. They were able to adapt to local life by practicing their professional skills, taking odd jobs, or working as vendors. By February 1943, when the Japanese military authorities declared the Ghetto in Hongkou, Jewish refugees had already opened 307 businesses. Most Jewish refugees could manage a low-cost life. Only 2500 refugees still stayed at the “Heim” and totally relied on relief.<sup>3</sup> Frank Theyleg, an engineer, first worked as a night-shift foreman in charge of lubricating vehicles for a bus company and then an engineer for a British company, and later did design work for a Chinese hardware repair shop. When the Japanese military authorities forced the shop to produce grenades and other munitions, he collaborated with Chinese workers to reduce the size of the leads

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<sup>2</sup>Tang (2007).

<sup>3</sup>Rong and Li (1992, pp. 385–408), Wang (2008, pp. 77–78).

so that the grenades could not explode, making an indirect contribution to the Chinese people's anti-Japanese struggle.<sup>4</sup>

## 19.2 Accomplished Jewish Refugees

The Jewish refugees in China included many outstanding figures. Here are some of them: musician Alfred Wittenberg; Professor Fanny Gisela Halpern who played an important role in improving mental health in China and Shanghai; painter David Ludwig Bloch; composer W. Wolfgang Fraenkel; painter Friedrich Schiff; Hellmut Stern, a refugee kid who later became chief violinist of Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra; engineer Han Buge, who viewed Shanghai as hometown; and linguist Erwin Reifler.

Before the Nazis seized power in Germany, Alfred Wittenberg had already been a famous violinist and pianist in Germany and even highly reputed across Europe. However, the Nazi persecution stopped him from performing in Germany, and made survival difficult for him. He had to flee to Shanghai along with thousands of Jewish refugees. In Shanghai, he was invited to teach at the National Conservatory of Music (now the Shanghai Conservatory of Music). He cultivated a group of outstanding Chinese students, while he also earned a great distinction as a musician and performer in Shanghai. He actively participated in music events of the Jews in Shanghai, playing the violin and the piano. Through music, he gave them courage to cope with all the challenges. After the war, he did not return to Germany, but continued to perform and teach music in China until his death. Alfred Wittenberg lives forever in the heart of Chinese musicians.

Fanny Gisela Halpern, an Austrian Jew, graduated from the University of Vienna. Her mentor was the Nobel Prize winner Professor Julius Wagner Ritter von Jau-regg and she was also a student of Sigmund Freud. In 1933, Fanny Gisela Halpern was employed to teach at the National Shanghai Medical College in Shanghai, and later served as head of the Department of Neurology at the School of Medicine of St. John's University in Shanghai. She taught psychiatry and neurology courses for more than 10 years. After the Nazis began the crazy anti-Jewish persecution, Fanny Gisela Halpern fled to Shanghai as a refugee where she advised Jewish refugees on mental health issues. Fanny Gisela Halpern particularly emphasized the importance of hospitals and medical schools as bases for training mental health professionals. She also attached importance to the role of social services and adult education in improving mental health. She helped establish a network of neurological and psychiatric education in Shanghai and even in China.

David Ludwig Bloch was born in 1910 to a Jewish family in Bavaria, Germany, and came to Shanghai in 1940 as a refugee. He could make amazing woodcuts, which are meticulous and dense, and one of his most famous works is an album Rickshaws. Pictures in the album show rickshaws in a variety of occasions. In December 1942,

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<sup>4</sup>Pan (1995a).

David Ludwig Bloch held an exhibition in his own name, showing 50 oil paintings and watercolors in addition to prints, many of which had been created in Shanghai. From May 5 to 8, 1943, David Ludwig Bloch and the other 13 Jewish painters held the first joint exhibition at Shanghai Jewish Club. He got married in 1946 and then migrated to the United States. David Ludwig Bloch held many exhibitions in Washington, New York, and Los Angeles, and also in European cities like Frankfurt, Berlin, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, London and Paris. In 1996, he revisited Shanghai, his “second hometown”.

Wolfgang Fraenkel was a versatile musician, a highly accomplished composer, pianist, violinist and conductor. He was born in Berlin and arrived in Shanghai in 1939. He taught composition and musical theory at Shanghai Conservatory of Music and also taught private students. Among his Chinese students, many later became distinguished musicians, such as Ding Shande, Qu Xixian, Tang Zhengfang, Sang Tong, Guan Yinshen, Li Naicong, Pang Xianpin, Yang Mashi, Li Delun, Liu Ruzeng, Zhang Ninghe, Zhu Jian, and Dong Guang. According to documents kept at the Bavarian State Library in Munich, Germany, Wolfgang Fraenkel composed six symphonies, of which the third and fourth were written during his refugee years in Shanghai, one in 1940 and the other in 1944. During his stay in Shanghai, from 1939 to 1947, he worked on six projects including an opera, symphonies, vocal music and piano pieces, but only two were completed. He took part in musical performances in Shanghai mainly as a violinist and pianist, and also as a choir and orchestra conductor. On March 1, 1946, Wolfgang Fraenkel conducted an orchestra concert at the Lyceum Theatre.

Friedrich Schiff was born to a Jewish family in Vienna. His father Robert Schiff was a famous painter who once painted a portrait of an Austrian emperor. Friedrich Schiff was already famous in Austria for cartoons he drew for newspapers, but he was more eager to see the bigger outside world. In June 1930, he took a train across Siberia and came to Shanghai. After Nazi Germany annexed Austria, many Austrian Jews fled to Shanghai as stateless refugees. Friedrich Schiff arrived in Shanghai earlier than most other Jewish refugees. Shortly after he arrived in Shanghai, he painted realistic images of the Chinese with distinctive characteristics. He also painted the folk customs of Shanghai and the living conditions of the lower class. One of his paintings was entitled “I Love Chinese”, which he often said. He published an album entitled Vicissitude of Old Shanghai in China which generated a fervor among the Chinese readers.

Hellmut Stern was born in Berlin in 1928. Gifted in music, he studied the piano at the age of 5 and studied the violin at the age of 9. In December 1938, he fled to Shanghai with his parents and soon moved on to Harbin where he continued his music. At the age of 17, he joined Harbin Symphony Orchestra. In 1949, he moved to Israel with his parents, where he joined the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Later, he joined many orchestras in the United States and Germany, eventually becoming chief violinist of Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. He revisited China many times and especially his second hometown Harbin where he gave performances and lectures. Every corner of the city meant a lot to him. He also donated to scholarship funds

for Chinese music students to fund many Chinese students to study abroad, some of whom later grew into famous musicians.

Hans Georg Adolf Hamburger, born in 1899, became an engineer after graduating from the Department of Civil Engineering at Hannover Institute of Technology. After Hitler came to power in 1933, Hans Georg Adolf Hamburger, who had only a quarter Jewish blood, faced with Nazi persecution. He arrived in Shanghai aboard an Italian liner on August 8, 1935, a few years before the massive wave of Jews fleeing to Shanghai. In China, he taught civil engineering and German, as well as mathematics and science, at Yingshi University in Jinhua, Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, Tongji University in Shanghai, Soochow University and Hangchow University. He worked hard and shared weals and woes with the local Chinese during the war years. He continued to work for China after the War of Resistance. After 1949, he worked for the Public Works Department of Shanghai until his retirement in 1966.

Erwin Reifler was a native of the Carpathian Mountains of Romania. From 1932 to 1947, he taught German, Latin, Sinology and comparative linguistics at Shanghai Jiaotong University, National Shanghai Medical College, Sino-French University and Université l'Aurore, except that from 1938 to 1940 he worked in Hong Kong. Erwin Reifler had amazing political foresight. After the Nazi Party rose to power in Germany in 1933, he predicted that Austria would face the danger of annexation by Germany. Although he was already in Shanghai, far away from Austria, he gave up his Austrian citizenship and became a stateless person. Against all odds, he achieved outstanding results in education and academic research, becoming the “international authority of comparative linguistics”. He co-edited the German-Chinese Standard Dictionary with many Chinese scholars and professors, which has remained an authoritative German-Chinese dictionary even to now. He was passionate and obsessed with Chinese culture and familiar with Chinese classics such as the Analects. In 1965, Erwin Reifler died in Seattle. His tombstone was inscribed with a sentence from the Analects: “If you, Master, do not speak, what shall we, your disciples, have to record?”

### 19.3 Solidarity of Jewish Refugees

As autonomous organization, the Communal Association of Central European Jews actively assumed the responsibility to raise refugees' awareness of common identity. They strengthened the solidarity of the Jewish refugees and their self-reliance, enabling them to overcome various difficulties and survived in an increasingly dangerous environment. After Japan declared war on the United States and the United Kingdom, Japan immediately took full control of Shanghai and classified American and British expatriates living in Shanghai as enemy aliens. Under such circumstances, funding from the JDC for the Jewish refugees was cut off, and the Sephardi Jews were imprisoned and dispossessed of their assets. The loss of external relief spelt into severe challenges to the Jewish refugees. Therefore, the Communal Association immediately issued an announcement in January 1942, focusing on the allocation and distribution of relief resources. Their measures included: calling on each Jewish fam-

ily to provide at least one dinner or a certain amount of money to the poverty-stricken refugees on a monthly basis; imposing an additional 10% tax on restaurants, cafes or bars, retail shops and using the tax revenue to aid the poverty-stricken refugees; and making the well-off Jews take pride in their generosity to aid the poor. This call was echoed by Jewish refugees, although only a limited number of refugees could benefit from their relief efforts.<sup>5</sup> In August, some better-off Jewish refugees managed to merge IC and CFA and established a new mutual aid organization, the Kitchen Fund. The fund implemented a “Patenschaft” campaign to collect regular monthly contributions from Russian Jews and refugees who had arrived with money.

After the Japanese authorities declared the Ghetto in February 1943, Jewish refugees who were struggling for survival had to cope with an even worse situation. Luckily, the Communal Association made every effort to continue their relief work through the Kitchen Fund to ensure that all the refugees could survive. From November 1942 to early 1944, the Kitchen Fund provided 5000–6000 hot meals for refugees per day, and about 1000 elderly people, kids and undernourished people got two hot meals every day. In July 1943, the Communal Association set up a special medical relief agency. In September, the Kitchen Fund set up the Jewish Refugee Hospital. Refugees who had no source of income got free treatment there. In winter that year, the “Winter Aid” street fundraiser was held in the ghetto. The Communal Association also tried to promote economic development and set up divisions for economic affairs and employment to mobilize the refugees’ skills.<sup>6</sup> As the Communal Association’s message for the Jewish New Year in September 1943 said, “The Communal Association for Central European Jews, as a Jewish community organization, demands that all refugees answer the organization’s calls, act and think in solidarity. The Communal Association will not give priority to any individuals, but will take care of the common future of all refugees, whether it is good or bad... Some refugees have lost their faith in face of difficulties because they did not get enough support from the community. Now, as a whole, we must provide stronger support for the vulnerable.”<sup>7</sup>

In terms of real action, the Communal Association took the following measures to enhance the Jewish refugees’ awareness of collective identity: First, restoring and highlighting the Judaist tradition and the Jewish customs in relief activities. For example, the Communal Association established the Women’s Union in 1940 to promote the Sabbath tradition among Jewish refugees. Women’s Union provided free Sabbath dinner for seniors and those in need, and invited rabbis to interpret the importance of this tradition to the Jews at the Sabbath communion. In addition, the Communal Association also distributed unleavened bread to the poor refugees to celebrate the Passover.<sup>8</sup> Second, establishing an independent Zionist organization and strengthening publicity. Before the arrival of Jewish refugees, some Zionist organizations had already been established, including the Shanghai Zionist Associa-

<sup>5</sup>Rong and Li (1992, pp. 416–417).

<sup>6</sup>Rao (2003, pp. 163–194).

<sup>7</sup>Rao (2003, pp. 52–53).

<sup>8</sup>Wang (2008, p. 223).

tion of the Sephardi Jews, the Kadimah Shanghai branch established by the Russian Jews, and a branch of the Beta Movement in Shanghai. After the influx of German and Austrian Jewish refugees, both the Kadimah and Beta Movement in Shanghai set up German-speaking divisions to accommodate the incoming German and Austrian Zionists. In September 1939, the Jewish refugees established their own Zionist organization: “Theodor Herzl Zionist Association”. Austrian Jewish refugee Ossie Lewin, head of the German-speaking division of Kadimah, founded and edited Shanghai Jewish Chronicle which later became the key channel for promoting public awareness of Zionist thought. After the Ghetto was declared in Hongkou, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was the only newspaper published by Shanghai Jews and its firm Zionist conviction inspired all the refugees. Third, promoting the study of Hebrew, Judaism and Jewish history through education and cultural activities. To address the school education needs of Jewish kids, the Kadoories established the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association School (the Kadoorie School) in Hongkou which first offered general European education. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Communal Association took over the Kadoorie School, made Hebrew a compulsory course and taught the Hebrew Bible and its history. German Jew Ismar Freysinger founded the Freysinger’s Jewish Elementary and Middle School in April 1941, and the Communal Association founded Shanghai Jewish Knowledge School which taught courses on the Jewish history and other related subjects.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the Jewish Science House held lectures on Judaism and the Jewish history in Hongkou regularly to help the refugees enhance their collective Jewish memory. For example, a series of lectures told “How Modern Jews See the Jewish History”, highlighting the role of religion in the Jewish history.<sup>10</sup> Cultural activities also strengthened the religious and political awareness of the Jewish refugees to create a sense of community. 300–400 Jewish refugee artists created and performed works that reflected their daily life. Their drama, music and other performances, combined with news reports, produced shared sentiments in the refugee community. In addition, the Jewish refugees organized a number of galas to raise donations and to encourage the refugees with songs and dances that recalled the Jewish history and tradition. For example, the Shanghai Zionist Organization organized the Maccabi events to spread the Zionist ideal and call on Jews to fight for it.<sup>11</sup>

In short, the spirit of solidarity that refugees showed amid the crisis was admirable. Due to the interruption of external assistance, the years from 1942 to 1944 was the most difficult period for the Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The rising number of deaths can indicate this: 130 in 1940, 167 in 1941, 320 in 1942, and 311 in 1943.<sup>12</sup> Especially after they were forced to move into the Hongkou Ghetto in February 1943,

<sup>9</sup>Pan and Wang (2010, p. 70).

<sup>10</sup>Rao (2003, p. 222).

<sup>11</sup>See *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 2nd Ed. November 18, 1943, 3rd Ed. December 23, 1943 and 2nd Ed. February 5, 1944.

<sup>12</sup>The data were based on the statistics of the book Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish refugee community of Shanghai, 1938–1945 (David Kranzler), and the Report of the International Red Cross Society on the Status of Jewish Refugees in Shanghai in 1943.

the situation was even more dangerous. Many Jewish refugees had to beg, but they still united together and managed to help each other. According to the memories of some former refugees: “Despite the internal frictions, in general, the Jewish community showed amazing solidarity”. The refugees formed bands and football teams to organize cultural and sports activities in the narrow world of Hongkou. The hard times were spent with optimism. Some refugees established mobile libraries, organized book exchanges, and provided spiritual relief to the refugees under difficult conditions.<sup>13</sup>

One of the chief factors which made life bearable for the refugees was the quantity and variety of recreation. There were three or four Chinese movie theaters in Hongkou, which played mostly American movies and the key audience was the Jewish refugees who not only craved for entertainment, but also for an opportunity to learn English. During the Pacific War, American movies were forbidden, of course, but old German, French, Italian and Russian movies still provided a fairly entertaining film-fare. Among the refugees, there were many professionals, as well as amateurs, entertainers and these quickly swung into action. Actors organized drama groups; musicians set up bands and orchestras and several singers formed a light opera company which staged some highly successful operettas. There were, of course, many coffee houses and bridge clubs, and even a few nightclubs. There was a very pleasant roof-terrace on one of the neighborhood’s tallest buildings, which was a great place during the hot summers. As could be expected in a closely-knit (and closely-packed) community of this type, there was a good deal of home entertaining. Due to the scarcity of food, hostesses usually provided hot water only, while their guests brought their own coffee (or, more generally, coffee substitutes), tea and sugar or saccharin.

Shortly after their arrival, refugees set up football teams, and within a few months they had managed to establish a 3-division amateur football league which organized annual tournaments and attracted thousands of enthusiastic spectators. They even competed with Chinese and other foreign teams. Other popular sports included boxing, ping pong, a little tennis and even some baseball. Although the community did not have any public libraries, several entrepreneurial refugees collected small stocks of books and established circulating libraries. The younger element in the community managed a booming trade of comic books. The Jewish refugees also established an association for Asian studies in Hongkou to teach and study subjects in culture, art, history, philosophy, and medicine in China and other Asian countries.<sup>14</sup>

The most successful job Jewish adult vocational training in Shanghai was done by the Society for Promotion of Handicrafts and Agriculture among Jews (ORT). C. H. Rozenbes, head of Shanghai ORT, was a Jewish artisan from Poland and a member of the ORT Central Bureau. After Nazi Germany annexed Poland, C. H. Rozenbes fled to Shanghai via Kobe. Entrusted by the ORT Central Bureau, C. H. Rozenbes organized employment training for Shanghai Jews. Shanghai ORT’s training was not only intended to help the refugee get employed, but also to serve the needs of post-

<sup>13</sup>Pan et al. (1995b, p. 115).

<sup>14</sup>Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, 6 November, 1943.

war reconstruction. So, the training focused especially on skills for the construction industry. In particular, Shanghai ORT encouraged Jewish adults to learn a certain craft. It cooperated with the handicraft guild to establish the Complementary School for Apprentices where apprentices could learn skills and theories that they could not learn from private masters. In addition, Shanghai ORT also held engineering workshops where experienced experts were hired to teach the young people advanced engineering. By the end of World War II, a total of 2200 Shanghai Jewish refugees had received employment training from Shanghai ORT. Among them, 855 people had taken the construction and technical courses; 401 had taken sewing courses; 279 had taken courses in other trades like horticulture, bookkeeping, bookbinding, beauty hairdressing, book management and painting; 292 had attended the Complementary School for Apprentices; and 423 had attended the engineering workshops.<sup>15</sup>

In summary, the European Jewish refugees in China had been able to survive in a very difficult and dangerous environment mainly because of their education background, their resilient spirit, their professional skills and their community solidarity.

## **Annex 1: Social Function and Historical Significance of “Shanghai Echo”<sup>16</sup>**

### **Rao Lihua**

What did Shanghai Jewish Chronicle bring to the restricted Ghetto in Hongkou? How did this happen from the communication perspective? Through an analysis of the content of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, it can be concluded that Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was an embodiment of the awareness of Jewish identity in the Ghetto, the opinion leader of Jewish refugee autonomy, and a window for the Jewish refugees to look outside. It was also an important part of life in the Ghetto.

### ***Embodiment of the Awareness of Jewish Identity in Shanghai Ghetto***

Wilbur Schramm, an American scholar on mass communication, once said, “Communication is the tool that makes societies possible. It is no accident that communication and community have the same word root. Without communication, there would be no

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<sup>15</sup>Lewin (1946/47, p. 46).

<sup>16</sup>Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was a German newspaper founded by Jewish refugees in Shanghai. It was originally published weekly and later published daily from May 5, 1939. After the end of World War II, it was renamed the Shanghai Echo in November 1945 and continued the publishing until the Shanghai Liberation in 1949, known as the longest German-language Jewish newspaper. Ossie Lewin was the editor of the newspaper.

communities; and without community, there could be no communication.” Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, a Jewish refugee newspaper, represented the Jewish refugee community. It reinforced the identity consciousness of the Jewish refugees and promoted their shared tradition. It was a cohesive connecting the Jewish community.

An important prerequisite for communication is that there must be a common ground between two parties. In a narrow sense, this common ground refers to the same language used by both parties. Broadly speaking, it means that two parties share a similar life experience and a common cultural background. The German and Jewish refugees who fled to Shanghai, as a social group, not only used the same language, German, but also shared the same sufferings. So, they were a community speaking the same language. The most essential feature of this community is the awareness of their Jewish identity.

Jews are known for their strong identity consciousness. In the first years of Judaism, the minimum quorum for praying to God was ten. When ten people prayed together, God would be among them. Judaism believes that in the eyes of God, Jews are a whole body. Instead of using the singular first person “I”, Jews use the plural first person “we” when they pray. When any Jew violates God’s “law”, God’s punishment is often imposed on all Jews. In the history of Jewish diaspora, it’s very often that the entire Jewish quarter would be affected when one Jew was found guilty. The Kristallnacht on November 9, 1938 was just caused by the incident that a young German Jew named Herschel Grynszpan shot a secretary of the German Embassy in France. As a result of internal cohesion and external oppression, the consciousness of Jewish identity and collective responsibility became a strong and tenacious ethic bond that connected Jews.

On the basis of their identity consciousness, Jewish refugee newspapers in Shanghai thrived. They created a strong Jewish ambience in the Jewish refugee community and produced a set of values, code of conduct or shared social language for binding the refugee community. It was especially true in the Ghetto because of the high density of residents and the external oppression. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle tried to arouse the national sentiments of the Jewish refugees and revive their identity consciousness. It stimulated Jewish refugees’ national pride and sense of responsibility through stories of national heroism when they were weak and fragile. Without Shanghai Jewish Chronicle or the belief it created that Jewish refugees were living in a “community with a common future”, the autonomy of Ghetto and the relief work in the Ghetto would not have lasted.

When the Jews faced ethnic cleansing, the highest manifestation and spiritual prop of the Jewish diaspora was Zionism. When the future of Zionism was still bleak and the Jewish refugees were in despair, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle gave a strong voice to Zionism and reported the activities of Zionism in other countries like Palestine, as well as those in Shanghai Ghetto.

Considering the historical and cultural background of the German and Austrian Jews, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle tried to reveal the harmful effects of the “assimilation” on the Jewish diaspora. It carried opinions on anti-Semitic theories and policies to warn the Jews to abandon their illusions and let them better understand the past and future of the Jewish nation. It also echoed the Zionist movement, inspiring the Jews

in Shanghai to join in the great struggle for Jewish rejuvenation. Therefore, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was really a banner for Jewish rejuvenation among Shanghai Jews.

As an embodiment of Jewish identity consciousness in Shanghai Ghetto, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle epitomized the ideology of Jewish refugees and enhanced their social cohesion significantly.

### ***Opinion Leader of Jewish Autonomy in Shanghai Ghetto***

At that time, the Jewish refugees had a unified governing body, a restructured Jewish communal association, which supported Jewish autonomy in the Ghetto. As an information hub in the Jewish refugee community, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle became the advocacy platform for Jewish autonomy in Shanghai Ghetto, mobilizing, organizing and managing social events in the Ghetto.

As a special social group formed under the pressure of social disruptions, the Jewish refugees had much more individual differences than any other social groups, in terms of occupation, social class, cultural background and social experience. The disruption of life brought strangers together. “We are a community united by a common destiny!” Shanghai Jewish Chronicle had tried to spread this message, on the basis that they shared the same history, faith, environment and sufferings. This message became their common public opinion supported by facts.

Ossie Lewin, chief editor of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, explained the concepts of collective, group and community in New Year—Turning Point of Destiny: “The attitude of individuals towards the collective indicates his or her level of morality. Whoever does not participate in beneficial cooperation should be jointly responsible for the misfortune of the vulnerable. Solidarity is a powerful weapon with which people may blaze a trail for the group at the most difficult moment. In today’s grim situation, no one doubts the significance of solidarity to us Jews: each of us has a great obligation to the collective. Only by fulfilling these obligations can we create new value and rise again from disappointment.”<sup>17</sup>

Another contributor to the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, Manfred Rosenfeld, stated in his article Heroism—Jews’ Outlook on Life: “Heroism is the highest form of idealism. Collective idealism, or loyalty to the nation, is heroism, while self-centered idealism is opportunism.” About the nature and significance of group, he said, “Each group has both heroism and opportunism, while the key is which plays a dominant role when the group faces critical moments. Looking back at history, it is difficult to find a pure opportunistic group. Opportunism is completely opposite to collectivism. Pure opportunists cannot form or maintain a group. A group consisting of opportunists is likely to fall prey to other groups and is despicable. Only an ethnic group, a religious group, or any group where members are willing to sacrifice their lives to fulfill its

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<sup>17</sup> Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, 3rd Ed. 29 September, 1943.

goals can last in peace and order. Opportunism has never ruled the Jews. Wherever it appears, the group falls.”<sup>18</sup>

In order to control our own destiny, the common destiny of Jewish refugees, a unified leadership is essential. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle has spared no effort to emphasize the importance and authority of the Jewish communal association for the autonomy of the Jewish refugee community. It has communicated to all that “a reliable governing body is indispensable to our life”. The Jewish communal association was the independent representative of Jewish refugees’ interests, representing all Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The restructuring of the Jewish communal association proves that the refugees can handle their own affairs”. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle called on Jewish refugees to cooperate with the governing body, pointing out that all Jewish refugees are obliged to cooperate with the Jewish communal association at this historic moment. It demanded Jewish refugees to “maximize their obedience to the association and behave and think in line with the overall interests of the group. Only every Jewish refugee is aware of their shared destiny and acts accordingly can he or she ask the Jewish community to satisfy their needs.” Ossie Lewin said in his article Calling for Cooperation: “I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize that the Jewish association has developed into a sound and strong organization in few months though critical voice is still loud. People have to admit the achievements of the association and it is qualified to be recognized as a spokesperson for Jewish refugees now. In the past, this organization did not fully play its role, mainly due to the lack of cooperation between groups which, however, is indispensable for an organization representing the Jewish community.”<sup>19</sup> Shanghai Jewish Chronicle also emphasized the integrity of the Jewish refugee community and that everyone was connected in some way to the community. “Everyone is a spoke on this big wheel,” said an article on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle. For the sake of the autonomy of the Jewish refugee community, “not only the refugees should trust their leaders, but the leaders also need to believe in the refugees, as they believe in their fate. At this critical moment, each member of the community should translate the word ‘unity’ into real action.”<sup>20</sup>

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was not only the mouthpiece of the governing body, but also a forum for Jewish refugees to express their opinions. Essential to the concept of “a community with a shared future”, freedom of speech also underlined the autonomy of the Jewish refugee community. As an information platform for the whole Jewish community, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle published the opinions, wishes and demands of Jewish refugees, as well as the communal organization’s administrative information. The newspaper encouraged readers to express their opinions and write letters to give advice on public affairs in their communities and allowed individual refugees to publish advertisements to communicate their emotions. As a result, the newspaper enhanced mutual understanding and communication between the Jewish

<sup>18</sup> Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, 7th Ed. 15 August, 1943.

<sup>19</sup> Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, 2nd Ed. 23 January, 1944.

<sup>20</sup> Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, 1st Ed. 30 January, 1944.

refugees and organizations and among Jewish refugees, highlighting their call for solidarity.

Information exchange, including exchange of opinions and views, was essential to achieve autonomy in the Ghetto. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle enabled information exchange and social interactions in the Ghetto by communicating and coordinating social activities in all aspects, such as relief, economy, education and culture. Without Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, it would have been impossible for the Ghetto with around 17,000 Jewish refugees to achieve autonomy.<sup>21</sup>

Through Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, the slogan of building “a community with a shared future” became an agreement among the Jewish refugees. Therefore, the Jewish community could cope with the challenges as a whole under the unified leadership. There were various evidences to support this claim, including the proclamations and appeals issued by the Jewish communal association, its plans and their implementation projects, the number of free meals provided by the Kitchen Fund, criticism and suggestions from Jewish refugees, the curriculum for young adult education, art performances to energize Jewish refugees, the heated assemblies, the amount of contributions during the “Winter Aid”, the independent trials and enforcement practices by the arbitral tribunal, the orderly work of Jewish Pao Chia, the prayer services on the Jewish New Year and the observance of the Sabbath. In short, the aim to build “a community with a shared future” is very well grounded and has a big drive for the solidarity of Jewish refugees.

Jewish autonomy was one of the basic goals of the Zionist movement. The Basel Program, which was adopted at the First Zionist Congress in 1897, set out the goals and guidelines for Zionists all over the world:<sup>22</sup>

- (1) The promotion of the settlement of Jewish farmers, artisans, and manufacturers in Palestine (Eretz-Israel);
- (2) The organization and uniting of the whole Jewry according to the laws of each country;
- (3) The strengthening and fostering of the Jewish national sentiment and national consciousness.
- (4) Preparatory steps towards obtaining the consent of governments, where necessary, in order to the goals of Zionism.

The Basel Program remained the guiding post for Zionists all over the world before the establishment of the State of Israel. It unequivocally encouraged the organization of all Jews into local or general groups according to the laws of each country. The autonomy of the Shanghai Jewish refugee community was based on this policy.

In Shanghai Ghetto, autonomy meant mutual assistance. Through the relief contributions from international Jewish organizations and the effective work by Jewish refugees themselves, the basic needs of 17,000 people in this refugee community were met, which guaranteed the mental health and stability of these refugees. For

<sup>21</sup>This figure refers to the number of Jewish refugees in the Ghetto in Hongkou District, instead of that of Jewish refugees throughout Shanghai.

<sup>22</sup>Laqueur (1992).

these Jews, when they were faced with the deadliest crisis in history, survival meant success. The subsistence of the Shanghai Jewish refugee community was a support for the global Zionist movement. Led by Jewish refugee organizations, 17,000 Jewish refugees worked in solidarity and sustained the hope of Zionism during the war. After World War II, around 5000 Jewish refugees in Shanghai migrated, or returned, to the State of Israel. Their goal was realized.<sup>23</sup>

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was fully aware of the crisis that concerned the survival of the Jewish nation and assumed the responsibility for the autonomy of the Jewish refugee community by serving a platform for these refugees to express opinions.

### ***Window for Jewish Refugees to Look Outside***

The existence of the Shanghai Ghetto not only meant physical isolation from Jewish refugees but also cut off external information. Due to language barriers, limited movement, economic distress and disruption of communication, they became isolated and almost blind and deaf to the outside world.

However, the Jewish refugees' appetite for information was voracious. Their tragic circumstances made them anxious about the future of the world and their own destiny, and craved for external information.

As the only newspaper targeting the refugees at that time, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was a channel for Jewish refugees in the Ghetto to keep in touch with the outside world, which meant a great spiritual relief to them.

In his book *Public Opinion*, Walter Lippmann told a story: There was an island in the ocean where in 1914 a few English, French, and Germans lived. No cable reached that island, and the British mail steamer came but once in sixty days. In mid-September, they learned that for over six weeks now those of them who were English and those of them who were French had been fighting on behalf of the sanctity of treaties against those of them who were Germans. For six strange weeks they had acted as if they were friends, when in fact they were enemies. The lack of information kept them away from the reality.

Thanks to Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, the Shanghai Ghetto was not cut off from the outside world. In the Ghetto, Jewish refugees were strictly prohibited from listening to shortwave radio. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was the only newspaper in the Ghetto and the only authoritative source of external information for the Jewish refugees. The content of the newspaper, including international and local news and information about their relatives and friends, kept them in touch with the world outside the Ghetto. Although the coverage of international and local accounts was restricted by the pro-Japanese collaborationist Chinese, this daily newspaper still opened a window to the outside world for Jewish refugees in the ghetto.

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<sup>23</sup>Their destination actually was the newly established State of Israel by some Jewish refugees in Shanghai after World War II.

Some Jewish refugees were concerned about the war in Europe where they came from and their families still lived. They looked forward to going back to their homeland. Some Jewish refugees paid close attention to the situation in the United States, as the relief funds for the Jewish refugee community came mostly from the United States. Many of them dreamt of going to the United States one day. Some Jewish refugees were concerned about Palestine. It was the front line of the Zionist movement and carried the hope of building a Jewish state. Jewish refugees were also concerned about the conditions in Shanghai, because their fate had already been linked to this city. “They had strong interest in the war. Although most news came through the Japanese media, Jewish refugees could know when the Allies won by instinct.”<sup>24</sup> They expected the Allies to win the final victory but weren’t sure whether they could live to that day. In the Ghetto, hearsay was one of the main “trades” in the Jewish community. Chushan Road in Hongkou, the business center of the Ghetto, was known as “a road of hearsay”.<sup>25</sup> Jews were dispersed all over the world, so they had sources all over the world. Based on the information they collected, they contemplated the future of their nation and themselves and tried to figure out solutions.

As a newspaper targeting mostly refugees, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle understood the psychological needs and concerns of Jewish refugees. Although the source of news during the war was strictly controlled and restricted, the newspaper still managed to provide information as the Jewish refugees desired. Based on their personal experience, correspondents from Shanghai Jewish Chronicle overcame the barriers set up by the puppet troops. Keenly aware of the needs and circumstances, they delivered reports on the war and the international situation in a neutral manner. They also presented contrasting opinions and provided the supporting facts. In this way, Jewish refugees were able to learn about the progress of the war and the changes in the outside world.

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international relief organizations were the major channels for Jews to connect with their relatives and friends in other parts of the world. For the Jews in the Ghetto, those news meant the comfort, pleasure and courage they needed to live in exile.

Even for modern people, newspapers are a necessity of life, let alone those who faced desperate difficulties. Newspapers were of even greater value to Jews. Communication studies have shown that adequate access to information is fundamental for people and social groups to maintain mental health. In the turmoil of the Great World War, Jews were exiled from their homeland. As refugees in China, they faced a language barrier and lived under the Japanese control. News reported by Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was necessary for Jews to assess their circumstances and adjust their survival strategy. In short, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, the only Jewish newspaper in Shanghai during World War II, was the mouthpiece of Jews, a bond between the Jews in the Ghetto and the outside world, and a window for the Jews in the Ghetto to look outside.

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<sup>24</sup>Pan et al. (1995b, p. 112).

<sup>25</sup>Pan et al. (1995b, p. 112).

## ***An Indispensable Part of the Economy of Jews in Shanghai Ghetto***

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was an indispensable part of the Jewish economy in Shanghai Ghetto.

The smart and diligent editors of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle recognized the significance of business development for the Jewish community, and pointed out that “well-functioning economy was critical for guaranteeing the basic needs of so many people in the current social environment.... This is not only about fame and dignity, but also survival!”

The role of newspapers in business development was also recognized. An article entitled “Intercourse and Connection Are Productive Forces” published on the extra edition of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle on August 29, 1943 explained the role of newspapers in Jewish economy in Shanghai Ghetto.

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, 6th Ed. Sunday, August 29, 1943

### ***Intercourse and Connection Are Productive Forces***

Intercourse was not good word by the standard of the Bible. In Genesis, there were Adam and Eve in this word, so intercourse referred to the sexual relationship. However, the word contains a profound wisdom. For thousands of years, mankind has been aware of and tested its correctness every day. In Aristotle’s concept, all humans are “social creatures”. In other words, people live in a certain social context. In order to survive, people depend on their relationships and intercourse with other people. Living alone is rare in the animal world and it is even less likely in the human society.

People had already realized in ancient times that production activities involved contacts and connections. Intercourse between ethnic groups and people-to-people interactions within groups preconditions for production activities. Indeed, intercourse does not only bring benefits; it is also a catalyst and a stimulant in the simplest form. The Roman culture was destined to fall, because it only took over the form of Greek culture without getting its essence. For either groups or individuals, intercourse has a certain risk. As the Bible says, bad company corrupts good character.

However, accidents have not caused people to dismiss railways, so intercourse cannot be dismissed for the risks it contains. Intercourse is a key driver in human life. The demand for intercourse is the most powerful inner drive. Deprivation of intercourse, such as solitary confinement, is seen as the most common and yet inhuman punishment.

In this sense, the media is of great importance. Books and newspapers play an important role in human life as a spiritual medium. A German proverb says that roads enable traffic, so we can also say that newspapers enable intercourse. Newspapers publish initiatives, recommendations, warnings, and their ads directly for material exchange. Where there is intercourse, there is life; where there are communication

media, there are active exchange and production. It is true for both spiritual life and material life. Intercourse is creative. It creates new value and also adds value to the original value.

This issue of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle is a good start. It is more than a publication; it is part of economy and life. It has at least made possible the establishment of new relations and the restoration of old relationships lost in the turmoil of relocation. After we settled down, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle took the responsibility for establishing new economic relationships in the Jewish area. From now on, we Jews in exile must adapt to such relationships. It is the Refugee Board's intention to form new relationships and contacts through relocation. As mentioned above, we hope that intercourse will not only be seen as getting together or for its own sake, but also a means to create new opportunities. Exiles living together allows for convenient and simpler contacts. If the exiles take care of each other, new economic opportunities will be generated. It has proved effective where compatriots live together, in any period of history. It is especially true for us immigrants. One must recognize this possibility and use it correctly. This issue of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle gives extremely valuable tips in this regard.

To the Jews who had lost their homes, the prophet Jeremiah urged them to build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. This preach applies to Jews in all ages and everywhere, as well as to refugees in the Ghetto. Economic and cultural exchanges will certainly empower them and create value, which is the guarantee of their future prosperity and a contribution to the prosperity of Shanghai. Then, if we observe correctly, what's the difference between life and movement? Intercourse is a movement, and intercourse means the same as life. Experience always tells us where there is intercourse, there is life, where intercourse is interrupted, the fire of life will go out. Precisely because the possibility of intercourse declined, the medieval material and cultural life was much less active than the classical age. Also due to the lack of demand for intercourse, the North American Indians had not produced a commendable culture.

Intercourse is creative and sustained, while abused intercourse often produces negative mutual influence. However, in general, intercourse is beneficial and moral. Intercourse is the productive force to guarantee human survival.

Manfred Rosenfeld

This article borrowed and extended the concept of “intercourse” from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels’ “German Ideology”. In German Ideology, their first book to expound their materialist conception of history, Marx and Engels argued that intercourse was the precondition for human production. The German word “Verkehr” has multiple meanings: traffic, intercourse, circulation, sex and activity. With this word, Marx and Engels embraced almost all meanings: social intercourse, including both material and spiritual, is the precondition for human production activities. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle accurately grasped this materialist viewpoint and made its own interpretation in both theory and practice: “Books and newspapers are the key material and spiritual media. As the German proverb says that roads enable traffic, we can also say that newspapers enable intercourse. Newspapers release initiatives, rec-

ommendations, warnings, and their ads directly stimulate material exchange. Where there is intercourse, there is life; where there are communication media, there are active exchange and production. This is true for both spiritual and material life. Intercourse is creative. It creates new value and also adds value to the original value.”

Based on the understanding that intercourse is productivity and that newspapers play an important role in business exchanges and material production, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle is committed to promoting economic exchanges and building ties within the Jewish refugee community. “This issue of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle is a good start,” Manfred Rosenfeld said. “It is more than a publication; it is part of economy and life.... It took the responsibility for establishing new economic relationships in the Jewish area.... Economic and cultural exchanges will certainly empower them and create value, which is the guarantee of their future prosperity and a contribution to the prosperity of Shanghai.”

From this extra issue, the plans, proposals, appeals, and overall strategy for economic development in the Ghetto released on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle, the economic guidelines advertised on the newspaper for registering refugee companies, and the creative and inspiring articles on economic development, we can see Shanghai Jewish Chronicle’s efforts to build economic connections and intercourse and the Jewish business instincts.

So long as there is a possibility, Jews would do business. That’s why this extra issue of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle focused on economic development. About the special meaning of this choice, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle explained:

We try to do business in the designated area. By establishing economic organizations, we’ve demonstrated an overwhelming courage for life. We’d tell them that under the new circumstances, we should use our spiritual power and unremitting efforts to create the hope of survival. Today, we call it business.<sup>26</sup>

As key source of information in Shanghai Ghetto, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle is also a very commercial newspaper.

### ***Testimony to the Faith and Courage of Jewish Refugees in the Ghetto***

Another key theme of reports on Shanghai Jewish Chronicles is SURVIVAL. It is a key aspect of life in the Ghetto. Whether they depended on external relief, strived to develop economy in the restricted sector, tried to derive power and faith in life from entertainment, or promoted “the best thing”—youth education and continuation of Jewish culture and tradition, the Jews in the Ghetto had shown extraordinary would power to survive.

Shanghai Jewish Chronicle transmitted the message of survival in every issue.

As the mouthpiece of Jewish revival, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle gave the strongest voice of the Zionist movement; the belief of national survival; as a public opinion

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<sup>26</sup>Shanghai Jewish Chronicles, 1st Ed, 30 January, 1944.

leader of Jewish refugee autonomy in the Ghetto, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle exercised propaganda, organization, management and service functions, bringing Jewish refugees together in strong solidarity under the Jewish communal association in the Ghetto; Also as the information hub of the Ghetto, Shanghai Jewish Chronicle showed extraordinary economic keenness, which is the embodiment of the Jewish nation's resilience and their strong will to survive. Their divided and sometimes contradictory attitude towards the Japanese military authorities is also a manifestation of this will to survive under the pressure.

In short, survival is a predominant theme of Jewish life during World War II.

When the Jewish refugees in Shanghai fought for survival in the Ghetto, their European compatriots were dying in concentration camps. Shanghai Ghetto was an oriental equivalent, or replica, of the concentration camps in Europe. Between 1941 and 1944, the Nazis deported millions of Jews from Germany and occupied territories to concentration camps, or death camps. In the death camps, the Jews' will to survive did not bend.

On August 2, 1943, the first Jewish uprising occurred in Treblinka death camp. In the riots, the Jews opened the arsenal. They shouted DEATH, and if the other answered SURVIVAL, they would give him a gun and some bullets. Soon, the concentration camp was enshrouded in shouts DEATH and SURVIVAL. The shouts resounded throughout the camp.

On October 14, 1943, another uprising occurred in the Sobibor death camp.

On October 7, 1944, riots occurred in the Auschwitz concentration camp.

For two thousand years, in fact, the history of Jewish diaspora is all about survival. Jews had to struggle for survival. They had been expelled, deprived, and slaughtered once in a while. They had to migrate and then settle in different countries and deal with different ethnic groups. A ghetto is the relic of a civilization that has all but disappeared, but, nevertheless, the Jewish nation has not died out. About this, Arnold Toynbee said,<sup>27</sup>

To date, the Jews still exist as a special nation, while the Phoenicians and the Philistines have long lost their original face. Their ancient Syrian neighbors have been forged into a new nation and acquired a new name, while the Israelites have remained safe from this kind of “metallurgy”, the countless country and church reunifications and migrations.

Historical metallurgy follows the rule of survival of the fittest, and the resilience of the Jews is a valuable spiritual asset of human civilization.

Shanghai Ghetto is the last ghetto in the history of Jewish diaspora for over two thousand years. In the battle over survival, Shanghai Jews were the winners. When World War II ended, they tore down the signs marking the restricted sector for stateless refugees (the Ghetto) and shook hands with whoever they met and danced in the streets of Shanghai which became so bright for them. When the State of Israel was founded, they saw the Star of David flying over their homeland, which they had seen in their dreams for thousands of years.

Meanwhile, they were shouting in their heart: The Israelites are still alive! It was so good to be alive when this day finally came.

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<sup>27</sup>Toynbee (1966).

Finally, justice defeated evil, reason overcame madness, and survival overwhelmed death. Shanghai Jewish Chronicle which recorded their solidarity and efforts to survive became a monument to the faith and will to survive of the Jews in exile in Shanghai Ghetto.

(Rao Lihua is a scholar known for her studies on Jewish publications in Shanghai. When she was working for Ph.D. degree at Renmin University of China, her doctoral dissertation was Newspaper of the Exiles: A Research on Shanghai Jewish Chronicle. When it was published as a book by Xinhua Publishing House in 2003, the title became The Spiritual Home of the Exiles: A Study of Shanghai Jewish Chronicle. This annex is an excerpt that book, except for a few corrections and revision to the text, subtitles, and notes.)

## Annex 2: Knowledgeable Refugees in China

### Li Gongzhen

So long as he or she could get a French or Italian transit visa and a \$540 ticket, any Jewish refugee could get to Shanghai, China, aboard a liner in Trieste or Genoa that travelled through the Suez Canal or passing the Cape of Good Hope, via Mumbai, Singapore, Hong Kong after a four-week voyage. In any case, this route was open to refugees before Italy entered the war on June 10, 1940. But after that day, the fleeing refugees could only travel by land. That means that he must first enter the Soviet Union, and then took a train in Moscow crossing Siberia to Harbin and then to Dalian where ships could take them to Shanghai.

Why do Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany hope to travel more than 7000 miles to a country that is difficult for most Westerners to understand its culture and language? Why were these refugees willing to come to a city where a poor foreigner was very unlikely to achieve economic success? The answer is: these Jewish refugees couldn't find a refuge in Europe and the United States, but if they didn't flee the Nazis, they would be transported to concentration camps and get killed there. Shanghai, luckily for them, did not require a visa, or police certification, or a health certificate, or a certificate of economic self-sufficiency or moral innocence or political party membership, let alone a Nobel Prize winning certificate. The city didn't impose any immigration quota. This oriental city was truly free from prejudices against skin colors, religious or political convictions, and was the only place which refugees from any country could enter at will.<sup>28</sup>

The Jewish refugees in Shanghai mainly came from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. They came in three waves.

The first wave began soon after 1933. They were mostly professionals like doctors, lawyers and technicians from Germany. Their number was not big, about 300. They

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<sup>28</sup>Borden (1983).

were very well accommodated by the Jewish community<sup>29</sup> in Shanghai and also received a lot of help and support from the sympathetic local people in Shanghai. Moreover, these knowledgeable refugees managed to bring along some cash and assets, because they fled Nazi Germany earlier. So, they were able to make ends meet for some time. They were also often able to find a job which allowed them to live a decent life. Since Shanghai was different from European and American cities that also received some refugees, there was no requirement for exiled doctors and lawyers to pass a medical qualification examination. The certificate of practice license obtained in Germany was also valid in Shanghai, so they could open a clinic or find a position in any hospital. Photographer Fritz Hoffmann who came to China in 1931 described this condition in his memoir: “When I arrived in Shanghai in 1931, there were only 10 Central European Jewish families here. In the first four years after 1933, the first batch of refugees from Hitler’s Germany were about 300 doctors, lawyers and technicians. They had managed to bring some money with them. The Jewish community in Shanghai was generally wealthy. They also set up a small relief committee for those refugees, but before 1936, only two families asked for financial support.”<sup>30</sup>

The second wave occurred after the Kristallnacht<sup>31</sup> and peaked in early 1939. Since most countries had closed their doors to them, nearly 17,000 Jewish refugees migrated to Shanghai from Germany and Austria. Compared with the first wave of Jewish refugees, these refugees had more difficulties in settling in Shanghai because they were mostly ordinary refugees, rather than professionals, except for a few less known and poor public artists. Shanghai’s Jewish community did not keep these newcomers out, but in general they were less welcome.

The third wave began in August 1939. Due to the heavy economic burden on both the local people and the Jewish Community in Shanghai, quota was imposed on the number of new refugees entering Shanghai. After November 1, 1939, Shanghai stopped the entry of refugees. However, shortly after Hitler’s invasion of Poland, a number of Jewish refugees from Poland fled eastward through the Soviet Union aboard the Trans-Siberian Railway. After they arrived in Vladivostok, a small number of them entered Harbin where lived many Russian Jewish refugees, and most of them reached Kobe in Japan by boat. The land route was eventually closed due to Nazi Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. In autumn 1941, a few months before the Pearl Harbor Attack, the Japanese authorities needed to make room for secret military training for a new war, so they sent over 2000 Polish Jews who had just arrived in Kobe and over 1000 Jewish refugees holding visas to the United States and Canada, who had arrived in Japan before the outbreak of the European War, to Shanghai. Of the last batch of 3000 Jewish refugees arriving in Shanghai, most were

<sup>29</sup>Editor’s note: It is usually translated as “犹太社团” in Chinese.

<sup>30</sup>Kauffmann (1986, s. 14).

<sup>31</sup>Editor’s note: It is now generally translated as “碎玻璃之夜” or “玻璃破碎之夜” in Chinese.

Eastern European Jews, including over 1000 Polish Jewish university students<sup>32</sup> and over 250 Lithuanian Jewish university students.<sup>33</sup>

After the three waves of migration, by autumn 1941, there were 25,000 Jewish refugees in China, including Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, and the Russian Jews who were driven south from Harbin by the Japanese after the Mukden Incident of 1931.<sup>34</sup>

How did these newly arriving refugees manage to live in Shanghai? To answer this question, it is essential to understand the social conditions of Shanghai after 1933. At that time, Shanghai had 4 million Chinese and 10 thousand foreigners, including 29,000 Japanese, 15,000 Russians, 9000 British, 5000 non-Jewish Germans and Austrians, and 4000 Americans. There were five universities, several academic research institutions, an excellent symphony orchestra, an English theatre, some premium restaurants, as well as many opium houses in Shanghai. There were also many prostitutes, beggars, cheaters and hungry rickshaw drivers. On a winter night in 1935, hundreds of people slept on the streets and were frozen to death. In 1935, 20,746 died on the streets and most of them were Chinese.<sup>35</sup>

At that time, Shanghai was somewhat like the city of Mahagonny in the opera *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* by the famous German exile playwright Bertolt Brecht and the famous German composer Kurt Weill, where even tiny disputes over very little money could lead to severe crimes. The overwhelming majority of the poor in Shanghai were exploited by foreign interest representatives who controlled the city. Domestic wars and Japanese oppression made their survival even more difficult than those refugees. Many early-arriving Jewish refugees could afford to hire a Chinese servant, while the Jewish refugees who arrived later had to clean rooms and make lunch for some wealthy Chinese families to make a living. Due to the extremely low living standards of the vast majority of local Chinese people, foreign refugees were often robbed on the streets.

Before the War of Resistance breaking out in 1937, Shanghai was a relatively rich city, because the world economic crisis that began in the United States in 1929 actually created a development opportunity for Shanghai, and many Western investors turned to Shanghai. Therefore, during that period, Shanghai had ample supply of consumer goods. Foreign goods were not taxed and most traded goods were textiles, food and cotton in place of tea, raw silk and opium. Cheap labor and convenient inland waterway transportation made up for the shortage of energy and raw materials. Products were usually manufactured in private workshops and the electricity cost was low. In short, only a very small number of residents in the city could benefit from the economic boom. However, the Japanese invasion cut off the city's ties with the hinterland of China. As Western investors began to look for other investment destinations, Shanghai's economy deteriorated rapidly. After 1939, Shanghai was no longer an economically prosperous city.

<sup>32</sup>Editor's note: It refers to the religious students of the Mir Yeshiva.

<sup>33</sup>Friedenson and Kranzler (1984).

<sup>34</sup>Benz (1988).

<sup>35</sup>Borden (1983).

The early European refugees could afford to live in the three areas for foreigners, namely the International Settlement,<sup>36</sup> the French Concession, and the Japanese-controlled zone dubbed “Little Tokyo”, while the late-arriving refugees had to live in Hongkou, the rundown northeastern part of Shanghai, where the rental of lane houses was 75% lower than other places in Shanghai and food was much cheaper.

The period from 1939 to 1941 was a relatively good time for most Jewish refugees in Shanghai. They were still full of hope, optimism and shared future, which led to positive actions. During this period, the key values of European Jews were introduced to Shanghai. With the financial support from Jewish relief organizations in the United States and their own efforts, Jewish refugees rebuilt the shabby streets in Hongkou, set up shops, restaurants and cafes, turning the area into a “Little Vienna”. They also set up their own schools and kindergartens, built a Jewish synagogue, established their own football club and a boy scout troop, and published five German-language newspapers, among which Shanghai Jewish Chronicle was<sup>37</sup> the most famous. They also had an adult education center to teach Jewish history, Chinese poetry, Greek influence on Europe and other subjects, although a course had only attracted about ten students.<sup>38</sup>

During that period, there were as many as 271 exiled artists from the German-speaking world in Shanghai, whose exquisite art works of European style were very popular in Shanghai. It is important to mention the professional musicians who were the most active artists. They held many concerts and organized many other music events in Hongkou. They were proud to have their own indoor orchestra. There were also some active amateur musicians. For example, doctor Erich Marcuse was also an outstanding band conductor, and doctor Arthur Wolf had been a popular composer when he was still in Germany. They all showed their talents during their exile in Shanghai.

From 1939 to 1947, Jewish refugees staged about 60 German plays or dramas of famous playwrights, including Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill, Theodore Lessing and August Strindberg. The performers were mainly exiled artists from Berlin and Vienna. Although there was a Yiddish theater in Hongkou, there were far fewer Yiddish audience than the German-language audience.

The Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany created and displayed their own art in Shanghai, but they had not influenced the local cultural environment very much, as those Jews had little direct communication with the local people. Painter Hans Jacoby had more contacts with the Chinese, relatively speaking. As he later recalled, he had painted many portraits for the Chinese citizens. He once tried to live in the residential quarter for local residents, but later he had to move back to the foreigners’ quarter as crimes were frequent there. The refugees’ works had rarely touched the Chinese theme, as most of them did not learn Chinese. However, several exiled writers later argued that the Jewish cultural community in Hongkou had shaped

<sup>36</sup>Editor’s note: It refers to the Shanghai International Settlement originated from the merger of the British and American enclaves in Shanghai.

<sup>37</sup>Editor’s note: It is generally translated as the Shanghai Jewish Chronicle.

<sup>38</sup>Borden (1983).

the Chinese music, which was probably true. Chinese scholar Pan Guang argued in his research that “the artists among the Russian-Jewish and German-Polish-Jewish refugees, especially musicians and medical professors, had influenced the Chinese in their own ways. The Chinese students they had trained are still active in the music and medical circles in China.”<sup>39</sup>

However, the good time of Jewish refugees in Shanghai suddenly ended due to the outbreak of the Pacific War. First, relief funds began to dry up, especially the remittance from American Jewish relief organizations. Second, influenced by Germany, Japan became more hostile towards the Jews in Shanghai, so their business cooperation with the United States and the United Kingdom was forced stop, and exports to all Japan’s enemy countries were also stopped. Third, the war had caused severe inflation. All this had made it difficult for Jewish refugees to get money to install stage lighting, and to buy paper, nails and even the cheapest costumes. Even worse, the heating facilities were not available for rehearsals in winter. As a result, most exiled artists became silent and light tunes did not match the heavy social ambience.

After the Pearl Harbor Attack, the Japanese completely controlled the whole of Shanghai. In February 1943, Japan designated an area of less than one square kilometer in Hongkou as the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees (the Ghetto), forcing all Jewish refugees who came to Shanghai after 1938 to move into this area. 100,000 local people who had already lived there had to share the slum with more than 16,000 Jewish refugees. As Dr. Kauffmann remembered, the Japanese also announced that Jews were only allowed to leave the Ghetto between 7 am and 7 pm if they had a job outside. In order to obtain permission, they must provide proof of the work of a registered company or institution. The Japanese also asked Jews to organize a security team (Pao Chia) to maintain public order in the Ghetto. As the Ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire, a small number of Japanese were enough to monitor the movement of people.<sup>40</sup>

The years from 1943 to 1945 were really difficult for the Jews as well as the Chinese residents in the Ghetto. The Jews found it hard to continue to their business. As they had to struggle to survive, they had not much time, money or energy to engage in cultural and artistic activities. What’s worse, Hongkou often encountered Japanese air raids which killed at least 130 refugees. Alfred Dreyfuss, a Communist, taught at a university in Shanghai when he took refuge in China before returning to East Germany after World War II. He recalled that he had experienced an air raid when he was holding a family concert. When his band was playing Brahms’ String Quartet No. 1 in C minor, a bomb hit the house and broke a leg of a little boy. Despite the heavy toll, the Jewish refugees in Shanghai finally survived the war.

After the Japanese surrender in September 1945, Hongkou Ghetto was liberated, so were the Jewish refugees. With the support of the United Nations, they quickly returned to normal life. The vast majority of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai migrated to Israel and the United States after World War II, so the Shanghai Jewish community

<sup>39</sup>Pan (2007).

<sup>40</sup>Kauffmann (1986, s. 21).

fell apart within a few years.<sup>41</sup> When the PRC government ordered all foreigners to leave China in 1954, there were only 12 former Jewish refugees in Shanghai. By April 1981, only one Jewish refugee Max Leibwitz still lived there. He was paralyzed by Parkinson's disease and later died in Shanghai.

Not all Jewish refugees fleeing to China after 1933 were settled in Shanghai. Some Jews went to Harbin in Northeast China occupied by the Japanese. Violinist Hellmut Stern was one of them. Hellmut Stern had followed his mother to China, so he was a second-generation refugee. He was born to a poor Jewish family in Berlin in 1928. His mother, Wolf P. Annes, was a pianist. After the Kristallnacht, most rich Jews fled to other countries. Wolf P. Annes managed to get a job offer from a theater in Harbin and took her family to Harbin via Genoa, Port Said, Mumbai, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Dalian. Hellmut Stern was only 10 years old at that time. Because the Sterns were mistaken by the Japanese as Germanic, they were able to live peacefully in Harbin. During their exile in Harbin, Hellmut Stern attended a music school run by Russian Jews. He studied under the Russian Jew Vladimir Davidovich Trachtenberg, the world-class violinist and former concertmaster of the Mariinsky Orchestra. In order to make money for the family, he often accompanied the performances of Russian ballets and played for Chinese weddings. In Harbin, he held the first concert in his life. Hellmut Stern stayed in Harbin for 11 years, witnessing many major historical events in Northeastern China such as the occupation of Japan, the arrival of the Soviet army when World War II was coming to an end, the Chinese Civil War, and the establishment of the Northeast People's Government. In 1949, he went to Israel with his parents and then to the United States. In 1961, he returned to West Berlin and became chief violinist of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to Shanghai and Harbin, some Jewish refugees settled in other parts of China. They did not have such a large number to form a Jewish community as in Shanghai and Harbin. There were some scientists among them.

For German-speaking scientists, European and American countries, instead of China, were their preferred country of exile, mainly due to the language and cultural barriers between the East and the West, the relative backwardness of Chinese university education and scientific development, and the ongoing Chinese war of resistance against the Japanese aggression. German Sinologists were the exception, but still not many took refuge in China. Professor Martin Kern, a well-known Sinologist at Columbia University in the United States, published *The Emigration of German Sinologists 1933–1945: Notes on the History and historiography of Chinese Studies* in 1998. This article listed all the 29 German Sinologists who went into exile after 1933, including the second-generation refugees. Among them, 21 went to the United States and the United Kingdom and 8 came to China. They were Gustav Ecke, Walter Liebenthal, Rudolf Löwenthal, Franz Michael, Erwin Reifler, Ernst Schwarz, Hellmut Wilhelm, and Ernst Wolff. Among the 8 Sinologist in China, only two came to Shanghai and the other 6 went to other Chinese

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<sup>41</sup>Sauer (1969).

<sup>42</sup>Institut für Zeitgeschichte München und The Research Foundation for Jewish immigration (1983).

cities.<sup>43</sup> These people are important for studying the experiences of German-speaking intellectual refugees in China.

Gustav Ecke had a long working experience in China before he went into exile. Graduated with Ph.D. in 1922, he was a professor of Xiamen University (1923–1928) and then Tsinghua University (1928–1933). In 1933, he returned to Germany and stayed there for two years. He went to China again as a refugee and taught at Fu Jen Catholic University (1935–1948). In China, he co-founded Monumenta Serica. He also served as lecturer at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. In 1949, he became dean of Chinese Arts at the University of Hawaii.

Walter Liebenthal graduated with Ph.D. from Breslau University in 1933, and in the same year he fled to China as a refugee and first worked as an assistant at the Sino-Indian Institute of Yenching University in Beijing (1934–1935). In 1935, he became lecturer of Sanskrit and German language at Peking University. After the War of Resistance against Japanese invasion broke out in 1937, he followed the faculty of Peking University to Changsha and Kunming. From 1946 to 1952, he again worked in Beijing and moved to India in 1952.<sup>44</sup>

Rudolf Löwenthal, who graduated Ph.D. in journalism from Berlin University in 1933, went to Beijing in 1934 where he joined the faculty of Yenching University as a lecturer in journalism. He also kept in touch with the German Sinologists in Beijing and provided them with translations of Russian scholarship. In 1947, he moved to the United States where he worked as a teaching assistant and research associate at Cornell University and then as an instructor at Georgetown University. He published a lot of works on the development of the press in China and also articles and books on China Jews.

Franz Michael received his Doctor in law from Freiburg University in 1933. In the same year, he was forced to flee to China because of his Jewish origin. From 1934 to 1938, he taught at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, retreating to the hinterland with the university after the Japanese invasion. In 1938, he went to the United States where he became a research associate at Johns Hopkins University and later was engaged as a professor at the University of Washington.

Erwin Reifler<sup>45</sup> had not come to China as a refugee at first. Graduating with Ph.D. in political science from the University of Vienna in 1931, he came to Shanghai for business purpose in 1932. Here he became assistant to the Austrian League of Nations advisor (1932) and later professor of German at Shanghai Jiaotong University (1932–1937). After Austria was annexed by Nazi Germany in March 1938, he went to Hong Kong as a refugee where he taught Chinese and German (1938–1940). Later, he returned to Shanghai and became a professor of German and Latin at the National Shanghai Medical College (1940–1941) and later at the Sino-French University (1941–1942). Because his father-in-law was the rabbi of the Sephardi Synagogue, Erwin Reifler was closely connected with the Shanghai Jewish community. From 1943 to 1947, he was professor of Sinology at the (French Catholic)

<sup>43</sup>Kern (1998, pp. 517–527).

<sup>44</sup>Kern (1998, p. 521).

<sup>45</sup>Chinese name is Luo Yimin. See Outstanding Figures Among Jewish Refugees in this chapter.

Université l'Aurore. In 1947, he went to the United States and became professor of Chinese language at the University of Washington.<sup>46</sup>

Ernst Schwarz, one of the second-generation Jewish refugees, fled from Vienna to Shanghai in 1938 as a student. In Shanghai, he began to learn Chinese and worked mainly as a sports instructor. After the Japanese surrender, he moved to Nanjing in autumn 1945, where he worked for the National Library and served as a secretary in the Ministry of Education. He taught at the Foreign Languages Department of Jinling University, after the university returned from Chengdu in autumn 1946. From 1947 to 1950, he worked as a secretary in the Austrian embassy in Nanjing. Later, he translated for the Chinese Foreign Languages Press in Beijing. He taught English language and literature at Hangzhou University from 1958 to 1960. In 1960, he left for the German Democratic Republic and then taught at Humboldt University of Berlin.

Hellmut Wilhelm was born in Qingdao, China. His father was Richard Wilhelm, a famous German missionary and Sinologist. After World War I, he assisted his father at the newly founded China Institute in Frankfurt am Main. In 1932, he graduated with Ph.D. in Sinology from the Friedrich-Wilhelms University in Berlin, where he studied under famous Sinologist Otto Franke. He left Germany in 1933 to become a lecturer (1933–37) and, after some years of private research, a professor of German language and literature at National Peking University (1946–48). During his first year in Beijing, he also served as director of the Deutschland-Institut. In 1948, he moved to the United States and became a professor of Chinese history at the University of Washington.

Ernst Wolff was born to the family of a German Jewish merchant in Tianjin. In 1928, Ernst Wolff began to study law at the Friedrich-Wilhelms University and learned Chinese at the Seminar für orientalische Sprachen. In 1933, he worked for a court in Berlin but due to his Jewish background he was soon dismissed from public service. He went back to Tianjin in 1936 and joined the Kailang Mining company in Tangshan and Tianjin where he worked until 1951. In 1951, he went to Tokyo via Hong Kong. In 1959, he joined the University of Washington as a research instructor for the Department of Far Eastern and Slavic Languages.

Most of these emigrant Sinologists moved from China to the United States after their exile, instead of returning to Germany. According to Martin Kern, three factors may have played a role here. The first is that the center of China studies had transferred from Germany to the United States where they found more favorable conditions to develop their new interests and methods of scholarship. The second is that most of the emigrants became professors in exile, so they were less likely to return to their homeland after the war. The third factor is that a German-language environment was probably less important for scholars in East Asian studies than in other fields.<sup>47</sup>

Almost all the Jewish refugees who fled to China from the 1930s to the 1940s and survived the war left China, but they were very grateful to China and expressed their gratitude when they left. Those in Shanghai held a grand farewell ceremony. They

<sup>46</sup>Kern (1998, p. 522).

<sup>47</sup>Kern (1998, p. 526).

made an artistic flower pattern to symbolize their gratitude to the city for sheltering them from the Nazis.<sup>48</sup> Many refugees have remained indebted to China, always remembering the Chinese kindness they benefitted from during the hardest times. Helmut Stern was strongly attached to China. In October 1979, he revisited Harbin, the city he left 30 years ago, with a German chamber orchestra he formed for that special purpose. He finally realized his dream of returning to his second “homeland”.

In short, among the intellectual refugees during World War II, those who moved to the United Kingdom and Turkey were the luckiest. Although the United Kingdom later became the forefront of the Great War and implemented the wrong policy of internment on “enemy aliens” from Italy, Germany and Austria, the country had a higher level of education and science and keener eyes for talent. Therefore, when policy of internment was eliminated, intellectual refugees could still fulfil their talents. Turkey remained neutral during the war. Although its level of education and science was far below the United Kingdom, Turkey still showed positive attitudes to intellectual emigrants. The country had a strong desire to bring in and make use of foreign intellectuals, so it developed and implemented supportive policies towards intellectual refugees. As a result, it attracted a number of German intellectuals, but rejected ordinary refugees. Just like the United Kingdom, it took in a lot of intellectual wealth from Germany. On the contrary, as a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, Canada implemented a weird policy: it preferred to receive manual labors rather than intellectuals. Therefore, intellectuals who fled to Canada or were deported by the United Kingdom under its policy of internment could rarely find any opportunity there. When the first intellectual refugees settled in Canada, their children went to schools in internment camps but have played a much bigger role in the development of the country than their parents. At that time, Switzerland was afraid of Nazi invasion which was an imminent threat, so it implemented strict policies towards Jewish refugees. Consequently, intellectual refugees meant little to the country’s science and culture. In Latin America, the first priority was to get the Jewish refugees to engage in agriculture, so intellectual refugees had no chance at all. China opened its door to Jewish refugees, but it didn’t benefit much from the arrival of a small number of intellectual refugees due to the gap between Eastern and Western cultures and the Japanese aggression.

In short, not all German-speaking intellectual refugees had exerted their influence on the development of culture and science in the host country. Whether they could exert their influence depended on not only these countries’ willing to accept refugees but also their policies towards refugees; it also depended on the security situation and the level of and commitment to education and science in the host countries. As a result, most German-speaking intellectual refugees flocked to the United States or Palestine after the war. The United States excelled all other countries in all the above aspects, whereas Palestine was the new homeland of Jewish refugees, the place where they wanted to realize their Zionist dream. The author didn’t list Palestine as a host country for Jewish refugees, because these Jewish refugees didn’t regard their immigration to Palestine as exile but it was going home for them.

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<sup>48</sup>Borden (1983, p. 289).

(This is an excerpt from Kultur in der Emigration Studien über die europäischen intellektuellen Emigranten by Li Gongzhen with some revisions.)

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# Chapter 20

## Characteristic V of the “Chinese Pattern”: Jewish Refugees Able to Survive by Utilizing the Conflicts Between the Dominant Powers



Unlike Europe, the United States and Latin America, most cities in China that received Jewish refugees were occupied by the Japanese, Hitler's ally, after 1937, and the situation got worse after December 1941. Although China resembled Nazi-ruled Europe, things were quite different. Japan took a different approach to Jews from Nazi Germany. Moreover, the Soviet Union was also involved. It claimed to be neutral, but in fact it had close ties with Jews in China and fought secretly against Japan. This complicated situation created an opportunity for Jewish refugees in China to survive by using the conflicts between powers. This chapter illustrates and analyzes this part of the story.

### 20.1 Japan’s Jews-Supporting Policy and the Fugu Plan

Why did the Japanese authorities allow Jewish refugees to enter Shanghai? Why didn't they persecute the Jews in Shanghai? These questions have puzzled a lot of people. To make things clear, we need to trace the evolution of Japan's policy toward Jews. After 1931, as Japan invaded and occupied Northeast China and marched down China, Japan posed a direct threat to the vested interests of some Western countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and also the Soviet Union. Under such circumstances, some Jewish experts in Japan, including Norihiro Yasue, Koreshige Inuzuka, Yoshisuke Aikawa and Setsuko Kotsuji, insisted that pro-Semitic policies should be implemented to consolidate the Japanese rule in Northeast China and improve its relationships with the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union. This idea later expanded into the Fugu Plan.<sup>1</sup>

From 1931 to 1937, the Japanese government introduced some pro-Semitic measures. For example, Jews in Harbin, Shanghai, and Kobe were allowed to establish the Council for Jews in Far East. Jewish merchants in Northeast China were encouraged to do business and attract capital from Jews to develop the region. Besides,

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<sup>1</sup>Marvin Tokayer, *The Fugu Plan*, pp. 29–35.

the Japanese government tried to please the Jewish communities in Shanghai and Tianjin and acquiesced in the influx of European Jewish refugees into Shanghai and other Chinese cities. In an effort to improve the US policies towards Japan, the Japanese government tried to tie up with American Jewish organizations by every means. Although these measures did appease the Jews in China, they didn't produce the desired diplomatic results, because the underlying hypothesis that Jews could influence the decision makers of the United States and the Soviet Union had not turned into reality.

After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, the War of Resistance escalated. The United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union and some other countries condemned Japan's act of aggression. Jews from all over the world, including those in China, also became critical of Japan. Under the circumstances, the Japanese Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Army Minister, Naval Minister, and Finance Minister convened a Five Ministers' Conference to discuss their Jewish policy on December 5, 1938. The Conference was an indication that the Japanese leadership cared about Jews. At the Conference, although the five Ministers held different views, they basically accepted the ideas and recognize the efforts of the Jewish experts.

Shortly after the Five Ministers' Conference, the Jewish experts suggested a more specific plan, turned the Fugu Plan from a hodgepodge of pro-Semitic measures into a concrete action plan. The key points of the 90-page plan document “The Study and Analysis of Introducing Jewish Capital” included: 1. establishing a Jewish settlement in an area of China under Japanese occupation, which would accommodate 30,000 Jewish refugees; 2. the cost to be borne by the American Jewish community, which would amount to 100 million USD; 3. the plan to be widely publicized in the United States and other Western countries. Prominent Jews from all over the world should be invited to visit this “settlement”; and 4. Attracting Jewish capital and improving relations between Japan and Western countries such as the United States through the settlement construction.<sup>2</sup> Upon the approval of the Japanese high-level leadership, the “expert group on Jewish issues” promoted the plan all over the world, especially in Shanghai and Harbin. They also did lobbying work in United States.

That's why the Japanese authorities allowed the influx of Jewish refugees into Shanghai after 1937.

## 20.2 Special Situation and Role of the Russian Jews

About Russian Jews, the history can be traced further back. In the 1930s, due to the worsening political situation, especially the Japanese invasion and the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo, thousands of Russians including Jews had gone back to the Soviet Union from Harbin. Unexpectedly, however, the Soviet Union escalated the purge of suspects who had allegedly engaged in

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<sup>2</sup>Marvin Tokayer, *The Fugu Plan*, pp. 50–51.

espionage for Germany and Japan since 1937. As a result, many Harbin Jews were arrested and some of them were executed.<sup>3</sup>

After the Pearl Harbor Attack, the Japanese army occupied Shanghai Concessions and Hong Kong, so Russian Jews remaining in China were subject to the Japanese rule. However, compared with “stateless” European Jews who had fled to Shanghai and Sephardi Jews who were regarded as enemy aliens by Japan, Russian Jews were much luckier because of their Russian citizenship. As mentioned earlier, Japan and the Soviet Union signed the Soviet–Japanese Neutrality Pact in April 1941. Under the Pact, both contracting parties undertake to maintain peaceful and friendly relations and mutually respect the territorial integrity and inviolability of the other contracting party; should one of the contracting parties become the object of hostility of one or several third powers, the other contracting party will observe neutrality throughout the duration of the conflict.<sup>4</sup> After the Great Patriotic War started in June 1941, the Neutrality Pact kept the Soviet Union safe from the joint attack by Nazi Germany and Japan. Similarly, after it declared war on the United Kingdom and the United States in December 1941, Japan also hoped to use the Neutrality Pact to prevent the Soviet Union from entering the war against Japan. Therefore, it tried everything to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

Such an international situation was good for Russian Jews under the rule of Japan in Shanghai. Some Russian Jews managed to obtain Soviet passports and thus became immigrants from a neutral country; those who were still applying for Soviet passports were also entitled to protection by the Soviet Union. Later, all Russian Jews were protected as the immigrants from a neutral country. Therefore, Russian Jews were generally free to move, work, go to school and do business, and enjoyed special privileges in areas controlled by Japan and its puppet state Manchukuo. In Shanghai, for example, after the Japanese army occupied foreign concessions, some Sephardi Jewish businessmen were forced to transfer their assets to Russian Jews. Russian Jews in north China had similar privileges. Russian Jews there, under the cover of their identity as immigrants from a neutral country, were able to continue their business. Meanwhile, they carefully maintained friendly relationships with Japanese authorities and avoided involvement in political disputes.

Manchukuo was regarded as an independent country by the Japanese, so the situation in Northeast China was special for Russian Jews. They lived a more stable life, had a closer relationship with Japanese authorities, and were able to play a unique role in helping Jewish refugees from Shanghai. For example, the Harbin Jewish Community managed to dissuade Japanese authorities from implementing the Meisinger Plan. However, most Russian Jews had refrained from cooperating with Japanese authorities.

In this special historical context, Russian Jews in China had enjoyed a much better life than European Jewish refugees and Sephardi Jews. Most Russian Jews would like to settle in China after the war ended, and some even wanted to participate in the reconstruction of China. However, the outbreak of the Chinese civil war in 1946

<sup>3</sup>Mara Moustafine. Secret and Spy: Harbin Archives.

<sup>4</sup>Li Julian, Jin Zhongyuan. An Encyclopedia of World War II.

shattered their dreams. Therefore, some Russian Jews, especially the rich, migrated to North America, Australia and some other countries, like European Jewish refugees. In 1948, the relationship between the KMT government and the Soviet Union turned sour, so some Russian Jews with Soviet passports were forced to leave. However, only a few went back to the Soviet Union while the majority migrated to other countries. In December 1948, the newly established State of Israeli sent Moishe Yuval to Shanghai to issue visas to Jewish immigrants on behalf of the Immigration Department. At the same time, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem also actively helped Jews in China book steamer and air tickets to Israel. In early 1949, Moishe Yuval left Shanghai, and Isador Magid became the honorary consul of Israel in Shanghai until 1951. Then, Dr. Abish held the post for a short period.<sup>5</sup> As Isador Magid recalled, although China and Israel had not established formal diplomatic ties, the Chinese government and relevant authorities in Shanghai did not deter their efforts.<sup>6</sup> It is estimated that they issued more than 7000 Israeli passports and visas to Israel and about 4000–5000 Shanghai Jews went to Israel.<sup>7</sup> Most of them were Russian Jews and European Jewish refugees, and only a few were Sephardi Jews.

The experience of Russian Jews from the former state of Manchukuo was quite special. On April 5, 1945, the Soviet Union renounced the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact. So, many Russian Jews lost their privilege and cover of their identity as immigrants from a neutral country and were kept in custody. On August 8, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and millions of Soviet soldiers broke into Northeast China. The Japanese troops in despair began to slaughter Soviet citizens, including Russian Jews with Soviet passports. For example, in Hailar, the Japanese Kempeitai arrested 18 Soviet expats on August 9, including 12 Jews, and all of them were killed.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, most Russian Jews welcomed the Soviet troops. However, after the Soviet troops occupied some major cities in Northeast China, they arrested some Russian Jewish leaders and charged them of colluding with the Japanese. For example, Dr. Kaufman was arrested and taken to the Soviet Union on charges of anti-Soviet collusion with the Japanese and engagement in espionage and Zionist activities. These unexpected changes drove Russian Jews in Northeast China to migrate. However, the Communist Party of China soon prevailed over KMT in Northeast China, and Harbin and Dalian and other major cities were liberated soon. Therefore, the civil war and the deteriorating relationship between the KMT government and the Soviet Union had less impact on Russian Jews in Northeast China. Many Russian Jews holding Soviet passports took this opportunity to open businesses and some even became highly respected “Soviet experts.”

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<sup>5</sup>Goldstein (2006).

<sup>6</sup>Goldstein (2006).

<sup>7</sup>D. Ofer. The Israeli Government and Jewish Organizations: the Case of the Immigration of Jews from Shanghai.

<sup>8</sup>Wei (1992).

## 20.3 Division Between Japan and Germany Concerning Jews After the Outbreak of the Pacific War

The Japanese Fugu Plan had failed mainly because of joint forces of the Japanese and German fascists in the great war. Jews around the world were aware that Japanese authorities and Hitler were birds of a feather, so they refused to support the Japanese plan for Jewish Settlement. After the Pacific War broke out, Japanese authorities gave up the Fugu Plan. Shigenori Tōgō, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, said in a letter to the Japanese ambassador to the Wang Jingwei regime: "Due to the outbreak of the Great East Asia War, we have to reconsider our policies on Jews."<sup>9</sup> This led Nazi Germany to believe that Japan would inevitably become anti-Semitic, and therefore proposed the "Final Solution in Shanghai", also known as the Meisinger Plan, as the solution was submitted to Japanese authorities by Colonel Josef Albert Meisinger. To put it in simple terms, the plan required Japanese authorities to slaughter Jews in Shanghai. However, Japan did not take Nazi Germany's position regarding Jews and there were still obvious differences between Japan and Germany in their policy towards Jews. Japan did not implement the Meisinger Plan in the end. Instead, Japan set up the Designated Area for Stateless Refugees, the Ghetto, in Hongkou. It is believed that there are five main reasons behind this:

- (1) Japanese who advocated making peace with the United States still regarded Jews in China as a bond to maintain contact with the United States. Therefore, they disagreed with the slaughtering policy. "Jewish experts" were still exerting limited influence.<sup>10</sup>
- (2) At that time, Japanese high-level leadership still tried to maintain non-war relations with the Soviet Union. If the slaughter of Jews in Shanghai happened, it necessarily involved Russian Jews, which would have a negative impact on Japan-Soviet relations. So Japanese tried to avoid this.
- (3) The Shanghai Jewish community lobbied senior Japanese officials not to implement the Meisinger Plan through Jews in Harbin (which belonged to Manchukuo) and Japan.
- (4) East Asia is a Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist region without anti-Semitic prejudices in Europe. As a result, the lower and middle levels of Japanese officials or their puppet Chinese officials in Shanghai were reluctant to accept or even resisted the Meisinger Plan consciously or subconsciously. They had even secretly helped Jews. For example, consul Mitsuaki Shibata, the Japanese diplomat in Shanghai, was sacked and arrested for his sympathy for Jews.<sup>11</sup>
- (5) The Soviet Union had defeated Nazi Germany. Heinz Eberhard Maul analyzes Japan's attitude changes in this way: in summer 1942, Nazi Germany seemed

<sup>9</sup>David Kranzler. Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish refugee community of Shanghai, 1938–1945, p. 311.

<sup>10</sup>As late as 1945, some Japanese high-level officials still wanted to revive the Fugu Plan in order to explore the possibility of peace with the United States.

<sup>11</sup>Marvin Tokayer interviewed Mitsuaki Shibata on May 14, 1976 at the Hotel Okura Tokyo in Japan.

to win the war against the Soviet Union, so Japan began to consider the German plan of slaughtering Jews in Shanghai. However, after Germany suffered a heavy defeat in the Battle of Stalingrad, Japan refused to go to war with the Soviet Union and gave up the slaughter of Jews. Finally, Japan only segregated Shanghai Jews. Heinz Eberhard Maul highlighted two important moments: one was January 1943 when hundreds of thousands of Nazi German soldiers surrendered in Stalingrad, and the other was February 1943 when Japan announced the establishment of the Shanghai Ghetto in Hongkou. His key conclusion was that it is not Japan's mercy that had saved Jews in Shanghai; their fate changed as the balance of war tipped.<sup>12</sup>

To sum up, the swaying Japanese attitudes towards Jews and the differences between Japan and Germany regarding Jews, as well as the “neutrality” of the Soviet Union, had provided Jewish refugees in China with a narrow space of survival.

## **Annex 1: The Meisinger Plan and The Designated Area for Stateless Refugees**

### **Chen Xinyi and Pan Guang**

With the outbreak of the Pacific War, the living conditions of Jewish refugee communities in Shanghai changed dramatically and refugees were endangered. There were two causes for this dangerous situation. First, as Japan declared war on the United Kingdom and the United States and took over the International Settlement in Shanghai, remittance from the JDC and other organizations had to stop according to orders of the United States and other Allies. Second, most Sephardi Jewish merchants were British, so they were regarded by the Japanese as enemy aliens and their assets were confiscated. Therefore, they were unable to provide any further relief, resulting in an unprecedented economic plight for Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The JDC convened meetings of heads of Jewish communities in Shanghai to find ways to streamline relief agencies, cut daily expenses and raise contributions from wealthy Jews in Shanghai. Meanwhile, as Japan and the Soviet Union were not at war, Russian Jews took advantage of their citizenships of the “neutral state”, and more actively engaged in refugee relief. They helped not only Eastern European Jews, but also German and Austrian Jewish refugees. Some Russian Jews established the Central European Refugee Committee and supported at least 600 to 700 Central and Eastern Europe Jewish children in extreme poverty.<sup>13</sup> The German and Austrian Jewish refugees also established the Kitchen Fund and planned a “Patenschaft” campaign to raise funds.

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<sup>12</sup>Heinz Eberhard Maul. *Warum Japan Keine Juden verfolgte, Die Judenpolitik des Kaiserreiches Japan während der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933–1945*. Iudicium Verlag GmbH, 2007.

<sup>13</sup>David Kranzler, Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish refugee community of Shanghai, 1938–1945, p. 302.

Just as Jewish refugees struggled hard for survival, an evil conspiracy was brewing against all Jews in Shanghai.

### ***“The Final Solution in Shanghai”: The Meisinger Plan***

After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, Japan began to suppress Jews. Just then, Colonel Josef Meisinger, the chief representative of Nazi Gestapo in Japan, arrived in Shanghai in the summer of 1942. He proposed the “Final Solution in Shanghai”, demanding that Japanese authorities arrest and slaughter all Jews in Shanghai. This final solution was also known as the Meisinger Plan.

According to Marvin Tokayer, we can gain a rough understanding of the Meisinger Plan. It was carried out in two steps: first, launching a surprise attack to arrest all Jews in Shanghai when they reunited with their families to celebrate the Jewish New Year of 1942 (usually in September according to the Gregorian calendar); and then, taking decisive measures to kill all Jews. As to how to kill them, the Meisinger Plan proposed three alternatives: (1) transporting all Jews to the East China Sea by old ships and letting them drift at sea and die of thirst; (2) forcing all Jews to do hard labor in the deserted salt mines located in the upper Huangpu River and leaving them die from overwork; (3) setting up a number of concentration camps on Chongming Island, conducting medical experiments on the Jews in camps and leaving them die slowly in pain.<sup>14</sup> Laura Margolis, the JDC resident representative in Shanghai, recalled: “Japanese authorities’ anti-Western sentiment was soaring in 1942. The newly arrived gendarmerie officers from Tokyo patrolled Hongkou every day. Captain Koreshige Inuzuka had left Shanghai and his successor Captain Sagittarius was not as interested in Jewish issues as he was. One day Peretz told us that the Japanese were hatching a devastating conspiracy targeting at Jewish refugees, that is, forcing all refugees onto ships and sinking them to the bottom of the ocean. He asked us to figure out a solution. We also heard the same news from other reliable sources.”<sup>15</sup>

### ***The Designated Area for Stateless Refugees (The Ghetto)***

“The Final Solution” caused fierce controversy in Japanese authorities. Japanese leaders finally decided not to kill Jews, but they still had to do something to satisfy Nazi Germany. The reasons why Japanese authorities had chosen the compromised way are detailed below.

Although “the Final Solution” was not carried out, Japanese authorities in Shanghai set up a Designated Area for Stateless Refugees in February 1943, which was

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<sup>14</sup>Marvin Tokayer, The Fugu Plan.

<sup>15</sup>Pan Guang ed., Shanghai Jews Memoirs, p. 27.

similar to a concentration camp. That was also the result of compromise. On February 6, the Shanghai Gazette published an article to promote the idea of establishing the restricted sector (the Shanghai ghetto). The article argued that the Abraham family, the Hayim family, Sir Victor Sassoon and many famous Jewish tycoons in Shanghai had got rich by selling opium and in other disgraceful means. These people were labelled as typical Jews who were evil. On February 18, both Shanghai newspapers and radio stations released the Notice on the Residence and Business of Stateless Refugees (the Notice) issued by Japanese authorities in Shanghai:

- I. Due to military necessity, places of residence and business of stateless refugees in the Shanghai area shall hereafter be restricted to the under mentioned area in the International Settlement. East of the line connecting Chaufong Road (now Gaoyang Road), Muirhead Road (now Haimen Road) and Dent Road (now Dantu Road); West of Yangzepoo Creek (now Yangshupu Road); North of the line connecting East Seward Road (now East Changzhi Road) and Wayside Road (now Huoshan Road); and South of the boundary of the International Settlement.
- II. The stateless refugees at present residing and/or carrying on business in the district other than the above area shall remove their places of residences and/or business into the area designated above by May 18, 1943. Permission must be obtained from Japanese authorities for the transfer, sale, purchase or lease of rooms, houses, shops or other equipment, which are situated outside the designated area and now being occupied or used by stateless refugees.
- III. Persons other than stateless refugees shall not remove into the area mentioned in Article I without permission of Japanese authorities.
- IV. Persons who violate the PROCLAMATION or obstruct its enforcement shall be liable to severe punishment.

Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Shanghai Area

February 18, 1943<sup>16</sup>

Although words like “Jews” or “Ghetto” were not used in the Proclamation, an article published on the same paper defined “stateless refugees” as those who “arrived in Shanghai since 1937 from Germany (including former Austria and Czecho-Slovakia), Hungary and former Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and have no nationality at present”. That definition clearly referred to European Jewish refugees. Finally, about 14,000 (or 18,000 according to another source) Jewish refugees, including 2800 refugees in temporary shelters, were forced to move into the designated area. On the evening of February 23, Russian Ashkenazi Jews in Shanghai attended a meeting convened by Masao Kubota at the Jews head quarter, a Japanese official in charge of the relocation. Kubota argued that the Proclamation did not mean the Japanese people were anti-Semitic; it had been issued due to the short supply of housing and food in Shanghai. He also urged Russian Ashkenazi Jews to help cope with the shortage. In fact, Kubota’s speech was an ultimatum. He threatened that any Jews who did not cooperate with Japanese authorities would be “severely punished”.

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<sup>16</sup>Sin Wan Bao, February 18, 1943.

From then on, European Jewish refugees started their difficult life in the Shanghai Ghetto. Before that, some English Sephardi Jews had already been jailed as enemy aliens. Although Russian Jews did not lose their freedom, they were also faced with the danger that might come upon them at any time.

### ***Controversy Over the Meisinger Plan After World War II***

After World War II, there have always been a lot of disagreements and controversies over the Meisinger Plan. The controversies focus on two questions: First, is there a Meisinger Plan? Second, what is the main content of the Meisinger Plan?

The first question stems from the fact that the original paperwork of the “Final Solution in Shanghai” has never been found. In fact, German and Japanese authorities had destroyed a large number of documents and archives related to massacres and persecutions that could be used as proof of their guilt before the war ended, including the documents of Final Solution to the Jewish Question in Shanghai. Therefore, some people suggested that this Meisinger Plan probably did not exist at all, just as some people denied Nanking massacre, Auschwitz concentration camp and other fascist crimes. Thanks to a number of international scholars with a sense of justice, they thought oral history could also be used as evidence, and began to interview many witnesses. Marvin Tokayer interviewed many witnesses like Laura Margolis and Shibata, the deputy consul of Japan in Shanghai, and finally figured out the framework of the Meisinger Plan over the past decades. Researchers from international authorities studying the massacre, including the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, Hoover Institution at Stanford University, The Sino-Judaic Institute, the Yivo Institute, the Leo Baeck Institute and Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, also interviewed many Jews who were then in Shanghai and basically confirmed the existence of the “Final Solution in Shanghai”, also the Meisinger Plan.

The second dispute is about the two steps of implementing the Meisinger Plan described in *The Fugu Plan: The Untold Story of the Japanese and Jews during World War II* written by Marvin Tokayer and Swartz Mary. Some people think these descriptions may just be interviewees’ hearsay which was later adapted for the appalling story by the authors. However, nowadays, people don’t have too much interest in this dispute because this plan aimed to persecute Jews has proved to be real in the history and it’s not necessary to figure out the specific methods that Nazis planned to take to kill Jews or other details of this plan.

(This is an excerpt from *Sources on Jewish refugees in China: Academic Perspectives* by Pan Guang.)

## Annex 2: Mitsugi Shibata Recalled His Arrest and Torture for Secretly Tipping Jews

I had a friendly relationship with the Jewish community and other foreigners in Shanghai like the British, so some people accused me of being too “friendly” to the “hostile people.” In the Jewish community, I had closer connections with Reuben Abraham and Ellis Hayim.

Among the Japanese officials in Shanghai, Captain Inuzuka of the Marine Corps understood the Jewish issue better and maintained good relations with the Jews. Therefore, he was responsible for handling Jewish questions. His relationship with Abraham and Hayim was also good. After he left Shanghai and transferred to the Navy, the Kempeitai filled the vacancy and their attitude towards Jews was hostile.

In the summer of 1942, the Germans came to Shanghai and proposed a plan to “solve” the Jewish question. I remember that Josef Meisinger and Putkammer gave the details. Everyone knew Josef Meisinger because he once worked in Tokyo, but we didn’t know Putekamo. I didn’t know anything about him. The main proposal of the plan was to “control” the Jews in Shanghai and then transport them to an island to die naturally there. Later, there were various sayings. Some said they wanted to build a concentration camp on Chongming Island for Jews, while some others said they wanted to send Jews to the abandoned salt mines on the upper reaches of the Huangpu River as laborers. I heard about all these sayings, but I had not seen any written plan. However, I am sure there was such a plan, because not only a person, but quite a few people told me about this. Some of them had attended a meeting with Mesinger to discuss the plan.

Later, the situation worsened, because the Kempeitai was annoyed by the Polish Jews and wanted to “take some measures” against Jews. I didn’t know if they would follow Meisinger’s plan, but it was highly possible. So I secretly told my Jewish friends about Mesinger’s plan to kill Jews in Shanghai. We also met at Speelman’s home to discuss response measures. The participants were Topas, Bitker, Peretz, Cardig and Kaufman.

A few days later, we were all arrested by the Kempeitai. It was said that some people who heard about the plan went to the head of the Kempeitai to confirm the news and our private meeting was revealed. The head of the Kempeitai was furious at the premature exposure of the undetermined plan and ordered us to be arrested. Of course, because I am Japanese, my “guilt” was the most serious and I was accused of “treason.” I was held incommunicado for 40 days in Tilanqiao jail and was tortured. I heard that other people who attended the meeting were arrested, and Topas was also tortured. I also met Hayim in the jail, and of course we dared not speak. He had not attended the meeting. I didn’t know why he was taken there. Maybe they wanted to inquire about his relationship with me, and his relationship with Captain Inuzuka.

In the end, I was deported to Japan. They warned me that I must not return to China within 50 years or I would be executed. Perhaps they thought Japan would still rule China 50 years later. In fact, the war ended just three years later. Therefore, of course, I could return to China as I like.

I want to tell you that my wife is Chinese. During the war, we did not hold a wedding, for many reasons. After the war was over, we held a formal wedding. That's why the Kempeitai treated me.

(An excerpt from Marvin Tokeye's interview with Japanese Vice Consul in Shanghai Mitsugi Shibata. Marvin Tokayer interviewed Mitsugi Shibata on May 14, 1976 at Hotel Okura Tokyo in Japan. Thanks to Marvin Tokayer for providing this material.)

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